

FAITH IN SUSSEX

The diocesan publication reaching church communities across Sussex



Joyful Maycamp!

Read how hundreds gathered for faith, fun and fresh encounters with God on pages /36-37

MUSIC MISSION IN MAYFIELD

/42-43

read how a church is growing faith and confidence in Mayfield's Young Voices

MEET THE DEACONS

/12-13

four deacons in training share their faith journeys ahead of July ordination

MESSAGES OF THANKS

/7

tributes to Bishop Martin for 14 years of faithful service

DIOCESE OF CHICHESTER

family
Camp
2026

Friday 19th to Sunday 21st June

Stedham Campsite, South Downs National Park

Kingdom Calling

a weekend of fun, worship and family time!



'What a wonderful weekend - I really felt God's presence'

2025 guest

The cost for the weekend is £30 per person (under 5's free)
including two evening meals and all activities.

For more information on Family Camp, and to book, visit:

www.trybooking.com/uk/FYCD





With Gratitude, We Step Forward in Hope

As we say goodbye to Bishop Martin on the 31st May, many of us will feel a mixture of affection, gratitude, and real sadness. For fourteen years he has encouraged the household of faith in Sussex to be rooted in prayer, generous in service, and confident in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Through times of growth and times of challenge, his steady, faithful, presence has reminded us that God is faithful—yesterday, today, and forever.

Bishops Martin's departure is a significant moment. It marks an ending, but not an emptying. In Scripture, transitions are often holy ground: Moses hands on leadership to Joshua; Paul entrusts the churches to new shepherds; the disciples learn to live by the Spirit after Jesus' ascension. The pattern is clear—God's work continues, and God's people are equipped for the next chapter.

Our Christian hope is never vague optimism. It is rooted in the resurrection: the assurance that death does not have the final word, and that God can bring new life where we least expect it. That hope matters in this diocese of Chichester—in our seaside towns and rural parishes, among families under pressure, those living with loneliness, and communities seeking belonging. We have seen hope take flesh in foodbanks and friendship groups, in prayer offered quietly at hospital bedsides, in young people discovering faith, and in congregations choosing to work together rather than apart.

So as we reflect on Bishop Martin's ministry with deep gratitude. We pray that this new season will be one of rest, joy, and renewed vocation for him as he returns to parish ministry. And we pray, too, for all who will carry responsibility in the months ahead—bishops, clergy and lay leaders, churches and chaplaincies, households and communities—asking the Lord to grant us wisdom, courage, patience and joy.

If there is one gift we can offer in this moment, it is to keep our eyes on Christ. With thanksgiving for the past and trust for the future, let us commit ourselves afresh to being a Church that listens well, serves generously, and welcomes widely. The same God who has led us thus far will lead us still. In that promise, we can step forward together—honouring Bishop Martin's ministry, and living as people of hope love and joy.

+Will

Bishop Will has been appointed as Acting Bishop of Chichester during the episcopal interregnum assisted by Bishop Ruth and the Bishop's Senior Staff.



AUTHORISED Lay Ministry

Course Prospectus 2026/2027



Diocese of Chichester

Living the *Mystery of Faith*

Find out more about the Authorised Lay Ministry course on pages 16 & 17 or go to www.chichester.anglican.org/authorised-lay-ministry/ and download a copy of the prospectus.

TURNING COMMITMENT INTO ACTION ON RACIAL JUSTICE ON PAGES /20-21

RAISING OUR VOICES FOR CREATION /22-23

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The first Female Saint in Sussex

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Chichester Diocese



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Diocese of Chichester

NEWS

Vacancy in See

During this time of Vacancy in See, and as we look ahead to the ministry of a new Bishop of Chichester, we invite you to join a monthly diocesan prayer gathering, held on Zoom on the first Monday of each month at noon. These gatherings will bring together lay and ordained people to pray for the life, mission, and ministry of our diocese, and to commend to God the discernment, calling, and leadership of our new bishop. This monthly rhythm of prayer offers a space to seek God's guidance, and to hold the Diocese before Him, as the household of faith across the Diocese. All are welcome. Please email Claire King on claire.king@chichester.anglican.org for Zoom meeting details.



South of England Show

The Diocese will once again host a Sanctuary at the South of England Show, Ardingly, on 5, 6 and 7 June 2026.

Coordinated by the Revd Sue Wilkinson, the space will be staffed by volunteers from churches and partner charities across Sussex. The Sanctuary offers a calm, welcoming place for visitors and show staff, and continues to receive warm feedback each year.

Alongside providing a safe space for lost people, the Sanctuary will welcome the Salvation Army refreshments van, Mothers' Union's Ministry of Cake, and for the first time we welcome Family Support Work. Together, they will offer hospitality, refreshments, and baby-changing facilities. A place to rest, recharge, and connect.

Visitors are warmly invited to stop by for conversation, cake, and to learn more about local community work. A small donation for refreshments is appreciated.

Please join us for a short service led by Bishop Will on Sunday morning at 11:30am.

Tickets: <https://seas.ticketsrv.co.uk/events/> (under 16s go free)

Churchwardens' swearing in dates

Churchwardens are elected annually under the provisions of the Churchwardens Measure 2001 by the annual meeting of parishioners as the senior laypeople of the parish and congregation. They are the bishop's officer, and are admitted to office each year by the archdeacon on behalf of the bishop.

The swearing in dates continue through June until 29th July. The full list of dates and venues can be found on the diocesan website: www.chichester.anglican.org/churchwardens-visitations/

Thanks for the ministry of Bishop Martin

Bishop Martin Warner has retired after 14 years of service to Chichester Diocese. Following his final service on 31 May, members of Bishop's Council have reflected with gratitude on his faithful ministry, giving thanks for his leadership, pastoral care and spiritual guidance during his time among us.

Members spoke first of Bishop Martin's deep spirituality. His commitment to prayer, rooted daily in worship, and centred firmly on Christ, helped shape the life of Chichester Diocese and those who serve within it. There was gratitude for his determination to ensure the Church remained focused on helping people pray, love, know and follow Jesus. His preaching, often delivered without notes, reflected both theological depth and powerful conviction.

Bishop Martin's leadership was described as that of a true shepherd: grounded in faith, yet attentive to the practical realities of diocesan life. When he arrived at a time of financial uncertainty, he gathered and trusted a strong and gifted team, helping the diocese to navigate challenge with clarity and courage. Particular appreciation was expressed for the progress made in safeguarding, with members noting the significant cultural and practical changes achieved over time. The Diocese is now left in a much stronger and healthier place as a result.

Council members also recalled moments that revealed Bishop Martin's warmth, humanity and joy, from creative Ash Wednesday witness on the streets to his readiness to trust clergy with difficult decisions. His willingness to stand out from the crowd when conscience required it and to act from theological and spiritual conviction earned both respect and gratitude.



A consistent theme was Bishop Martin's pastoral attentiveness. He will be remembered as someone who showed up, visiting clergy and families across the Diocese in times of illness and crisis, continuing to pray for individuals long after formal responsibilities had ended and holding people in care with faithfulness and compassion. His remarkable memory for names, faces, parishes and contexts spoke of a genuine attentiveness to people and place, helped perhaps by his well-known habit of travelling the diocese by bicycle.

There was particular thanksgiving for his support of the laity and his affirmation of lay vocation, including through the Order of St Richard and his presence in parishes across all parts of the diocese, often visiting in the evenings to ensure people could be included. His encouragement and care for ordinands and their families were remembered with gratitude, as was his commitment to high standards in formation.

Bishop Martin's ministry was also recognised for the way he helped the diocese to live with difference. Members gave thanks for the space created for women to flourish in ordained ministry and for his vision of the Church as a "household of faith" one in which disagreement can be held within unity and where people are encouraged to cherish what binds them together in Christ.

As the Diocese continues to discern who God is calling next to serve as Bishop, Bishop's Council joins the whole diocese in thanksgiving for Bishop Martin's faithful ministry, praying with gratitude for all that has been and with hope for all that is to come for Bishop Martin, the Diocese, and the next Bishop of Chichester.

Bishop Ruth Celebrates Launch of Café Neuro in Burgess Hill

Bishop Ruth joined celebrations at the launch of Café Neuro in Burgess Hill, a new initiative by the Christian charity, Befriended. The café offers a welcoming, supportive space for older people, carers and those living with conditions such as dementia, Parkinson's and stroke.

Founded by Chief Executive, Gail Millar, Befriended seeks to reduce loneliness and isolation among older people. Welcoming guests alongside Bishop Ruth, the charity's Patron since 2021, Gail shared its vision of creating places where people feel seen, heard and supported. Community backing was evident, with the Mayor of Burgess Hill, Stuart Condie, and Salvation Army Divisional Commander Major Tracey Palmer in attendance.

During the event, Bishop Ruth spoke with attendees and volunteers, hearing stories of the café's impact. One guest described how support received there helped secure a Blue Badge, bringing renewed independence.



Café Neuro reflects Befriended's mission, working with local churches to bring joy, hope and connection to older people across Mid Sussex.

You can find out more www.befriended.org

Church Action on Poverty Sunday

This year's Church Action on Poverty Sunday will take place on Sunday 18th October, with a theme of "Food, faith and fellowship".

A record number of churches took part last year, and interested churches are encouraged to register now.

Resource packs will be sent out over the summer, containing bring & share lunch ideas, worship materials, prayer cards, Scriptural reflections, activity sheets, and inspirational stories of churches already doing great work through food.

To sign up, visit church-poverty.org.uk/sunday

Wellbeing, Mental Health and the Church: Is the church still a hospital for the soul?

All are invited to St Mary's Church, Buriton, for a three-part seminar series exploring mental health and the Church in 2026, asking whether the Church can still be a "hospital for the soul". Led by Rev André Radmall, priest, psychotherapist and author, the sessions will address whether the Church is part of the problem or solution, how ancient practices can restore identity, and how spirituality supports wellbeing. Seminars take place on 4, 6, and 7 July at 7.30pm, in person and online. Booking details are available at www.stmarysburiton.church under Upcoming Events. Radmall brings experience across church, therapy, media and corporate consultancy work wide.

Celebrating the Rural Church and Community

Led by Revd Gary Cregeen at Penhurst Retreat Centre on Monday 29 June, this Retreat Day will include biblical reflection relating to the rhythms of the agricultural year, focussing on Plough, Rogation, Lammas, and Harvest. Alongside simple seasonal liturgy, there will be time for personal reflection and prayer. Join Revd Cregeen, Rural Officer for the Diocese at Penhurst Retreat Centre, TN33 9QP. The cost for the day, to include a two course meal at lunchtime is £50

Go to www.penhurst.org.uk for more information and to book your place.

Priesting's in Petertide

Bishop Ruth will preside at the Petertide ordination of priests on Saturday 13 June, 1:30 pm at St Mary's Parish Church, Horsham.

Please pray for:

Alexandra Ruth Estelle Barlow who continues to serve at Brighton, St Peter

Andrew Elliott Dyvik-James who continues to serve at Clayton with Keymer

Monique Olivia Mendes Da Costa who continues to serve Slaugham and Staplefield Common

Jack Samuel McDonald who continues to serve Aldrington, St Leonard

Carolyn Scott who continues to serve St Wilfrid's, Haywards Heath

The ordination of deacons is on pages 12-13.

The Net Zero Quick Wins Grant Fund is now open

The Diocese's Small Grant Funds for building works to church buildings have now reopened for applications. Small grants are available to assist with repairs, improvements, and Net Zero interventions which help parishes strengthen the long term viability of their buildings.

Net Zero Carbon Quick Wins Grants fund practical, Net Zero-related projects in churches and church halls.

Further details, including the Guidance for Applicants and the Application Form, are available on the website: <https://www.chichester.anglican.org/Small-Grants/>. For enquiries, please contact Daniel Lee, Church Buildings Support Officer, at Daniel.Lee@chichester.anglican.org

Free Carbon Literacy courses

Free courses are running from 30 June to 21 July (Tuesday evenings, 7–9pm) in partnership with Portsmouth Diocese.

This accredited course builds understanding of the carbon impact of everyday activities and equips you with the knowledge and practical skills to reduce emissions and inspire others. It is led by certified trainers from the Chichester and Portsmouth dioceses.

The course runs over four sessions, and full attendance is required. There will be a small amount of light 'homework' between sessions.

The course is free. An optional certificate is available for £15 on completion.

Book your place via Eventbrite [here](#)



Melissa Davies



Geoff Payne



Belinda Ramsay

STAFF CHANGES AT CHURCH HOUSE



Caroline Roope



Gareth Martin



Jude Davis



Katy Holbird

Over recent months there have been a number of changes within the teams at Church House. We have had some national funding to create some new roles to help deliver our Diocesan Strategy for Growth. Other changes reflect colleagues moving on to new opportunities or changes in personal circumstances.

In December, we said a fond farewell to Canon Rebecca Swyer, Director of Apostolic Life, who served the diocese faithfully for almost ten years. We are pleased to welcome Jude Davis as the new Director of Apostolic Life. Jude looks forward to meeting those exploring vocation and discipleship in the coming months, and to working closely with the Apostolic Life team.

A new Strategic Programmes Team has been established, funded by the national church. This is led by Justin Whittaker, alongside Melissa Davies as Strategic Programmes Communications and Engagement Officer, Katy Holbird as Children, Youth and Families Strategic Delivery Officer and Geoff

Payne as Programme Delivery Manager. The team are looking forward to engaging with parishes and deaneries on how the whole diocese can get involved.

We've created the Parish Support Team out of the Apostolic Life team to cover the support we provide in Governance, Finance, Generosity, Children's and Youth Work and Parish Development. Belinda Ramsey joined in March as Children and Families Officer to work alongside Dan Jenkins.

In June, we will say farewell to Emma Arbuthnot and Anne-Marie Mizler, both of whom leave after ten years of dedicated service. We are very grateful for all they have contributed and will miss them greatly. We wish them every happiness for the future. Within the Church Buildings Team, we are pleased to welcome Caroline Roope as Parish Fundraising Adviser and Gareth Martin as Net Zero Carbon Officer for Parishes.

Finally, Fiona Bryer has joined as Executive Assistant to Bishop Ruth, following the retirement of Amanda Belcher. We thank Amanda for her service and wish her well in her retirement.

A new Strategic Programmes Team has been established, funded by the national church.

CATHEDRAL TO HOST DEACON ORDINATIONS

We look forward with joy to the ordination of four new deacons at Chichester Cathedral on Saturday 4th July. The Bishop of Horsham, Ruth Bushyager, will ordain the four candidates.

Family and friends will be among the congregation at this significant moment in their lives. Following ordination, each candidate will begin their ministry as a curate in parishes across the diocese. After a year of training and service, they will, God willing, be ordained as priests.



Harriet (Harri) England

To serve in the Rye Benefice

“I’m delighted to be joining the Rye Ministry Team. Having spent the ten years before theological college in Hastings, I feel I know the area well and am looking forward to being back near the sea, enjoying long walks and time in local coffee shops.

I’ll also be bringing my cat, Lady Jane Grey, whose name hints at my love of history. I’m looking forward to unpacking my books at last. As I prepare for curacy, I would very much value your prayers for a smooth transition.”



Jacob Wigley

To serve at Chichester Cathedral

“I am 27 and have been training for ministry at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. I grew up in the Leeds–Bradford area before moving to France, and later to Buckingham, where I have spent most of my life. I live with my wife, Hannah, and our newborn daughter, Isabelle.

I have a particular interest in theology, especially in the area of Christian friendship.”



Jacob Mayho

To serve at St Michael and All Angels, Eastbourne

“I am married to Rebecca and we have two young sons. As the son of a Pentecostal pastor, church has always been central to my life. Ordination in the Church of England was not something I once expected, but through several significant moments I came to recognise God’s call. Before training for ordination, I served as a youth pastor in Tunbridge Wells.

I enjoy football—more as a spectator than a player—and am also a fan of Test cricket (the longer the match, the better). As a family, we love exploring new places, trying new foods, and enjoying God’s creation together.”



Martin Draper

To serve in the Benefice of Yapton, Clymping and Ford

“My journey towards ordination has unfolded over many years—perhaps even decades—beginning with a passing comment from a bishop thirty years ago, and sustained by a persistent sense that there was something more to explore.

For the past ten years, I have had the privilege of serving as a Licensed Lay Reader, leading worship and preaching as part of a team. Alongside this, in my role as Deputy Head of a primary school, I have sought to live out a commitment to service, care and community. I look forward to continuing this calling as an Assistant Curate (Self-Supporting Minister) in the benefice of St Mary’s, Yapton; St Mary’s, Clymping; and St Andrew’s, Ford.”

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

If you feel called to ordained ministry, we would love to hear from you - please contact your vicar or chaplain in the first instance. Further information is available on the diocesan website www.chichester.anglican.org

DIOCESAN

Growth Strategy

By Justin Whittaker, Head of Strategic Programmes

Justin joined the Diocese in 2025 to lead the strategic programmes underpinning the Diocesan Growth Strategy. In this article Justin sets out the steps toward a ten-year plan to create vibrant, sustainable Christian communities of faith across Sussex.

At its heart, the Diocesan Growth Strategy, recognises both the challenge and the opportunity before us. In recent decades, church attendance has declined, even as spiritual hunger remains strong in our communities. The Growth Strategy seeks to reverse this trend by investing intentionally in mission, people, and places - so that more lives may be transformed by God's love. This includes growing regular worshipping communities and seeing measurable increases in attendance, baptisms, and confirmations across the Diocese.

This is not simply about numbers, but about renewal. The vision is to see at least 80 churches across Sussex strengthened and supported to grow, welcoming thousands of new disciples in the years ahead. Alongside this, the strategy prioritises deeper engagement with children and young people, the development of new worshipping communities, and equipping a new generation of lay and ordained leaders to sustain growth over the long term.

Five key strands shape this work. The first, apostolic partnerships and revitalisations focus on renewing and strengthening local churches, particularly in areas of social need. Thriving churches work alongside neighbouring

parishes to share leadership, resources, and mission expertise, while revitalisation supports churches facing significant challenges through new leadership, vision, and targeted investment.

The Children, Youth and Families (CYF) stream helps churches build meaningful and lasting connections with younger generations. It supports the development of age-appropriate ministry, creates welcoming environments, and invests in leaders, while encouraging partnerships with schools and local communities so that more young people can encounter God's love and grow in discipleship.

The third, focal ministry strengthens sustainable local leadership, particularly where clergy oversee multiple churches. It equips lay and ordained leaders to take responsibility for worship, pastoral care, and mission in their context, ensuring churches remain active, locally rooted, and able to grow despite changing ministry resources.

The Excellent Leaders stream focuses on developing confident, resilient leaders through training, mentoring, and formation, equipping them with the skills and spiritual depth needed to lead churches through change and growth.

Finally, the Mission Fund, through small grants and innovation grants, resources local mission by supporting both grassroots experimentation and larger strategic projects, fostering creativity, confidence, and shared learning across the Diocese.

The growth strategy is, above all, a shared endeavour - inviting every parish, congregation, and individual to play their part in God's mission.

MISSION FUND: SMALL GRANTS AND INNOVATION FUND

One of the most exciting elements of the Diocesan Growth Strategy is the Mission Fund, encompassing both small grants and innovation grants, which is designed to empower parishes to respond creatively to the needs of their communities.

Small Grants

Small Grants enables churches to act on opportunities, offering accessible funding to support new ideas, pilot projects, and grassroots initiatives that might not otherwise be possible.

These grants, typically £2000 or less, are intentionally flexible and relatively quick to access, encouraging experimentation and innovation. They are not large-scale transformation projects. They are often the catalyst for small but significant missional steps such as new outreach activities, community partnerships, or ways of engaging those who have little or no connection with church life.

Parishes across the Diocese have begun to explore how such funding can unlock fresh approaches to mission. This might include starting new worshipping communities, developing children and families' work, creating spaces of welcome and hospitality, or using creative arts and digital platforms to share the Gospel in accessible ways.

INNOVATION GRANTS

Innovation grants are designed to help parishes move beyond their established ways by testing and developing new approaches to ministry, mission, and community engagement. They provide the space and resource to take thoughtful risks, pilot new ideas, and respond creatively to changing contexts. Alongside this, they encourage learning - supporting parishes to evaluate what is effective, share insights, and build confidence in innovation.

As such, the innovation stream is both practical and forward-looking. It enables churches to experiment and grow today, while helping to shape a more adaptable, outward-facing Church for the future - one that is equipped to evolve, scale what works, and share God's love more effectively across Sussex.

Two churches who have already received a small grant welcome the initiative:

All Join In! (Warnham, St Margaret's)

A £2,000 small grant is helping St Margaret's create flexible, inclusive worship by replacing fixed pew-based layouts with portable furniture and interactive resources. This enables intergenerational services, café-style gatherings, and community events to take place in the church itself, strengthening belonging and widening local engagement.

Extending Use of the Community Garden (St John's, Preston, Brighton)

A £2,000 small grant is helping St John's expand its thriving community garden, increasing volunteer sessions, improving accessibility and hosting seasonal events. The garden offers welcome, wellbeing, and connection for local residents, while gently introducing people to Christian community, care for creation, and opportunities to explore faith.

Courses capture the imagination



A growing number of people across the diocese are stepping forward to explore their calling and deepen their faith through Authorised Lay Ministry (ALM) and the Bishop's Certificate.

This year's ALM candidates were commissioned at Chichester Cathedral on Saturday, May 9, an important milestone in their service.

Their stories reflect the diversity of pathways available and a shared desire to serve their churches and communities with confidence and faith.

Dan Elms, a chorister at St Mary's Rye, chose to explore the "traditional church music in worship" module as a natural extension of his role.

He said: "It felt like a logical step but also something that would have a deep personal and spiritual impact."

Highlights included learning to read medieval square notation, composing plainsong and designing a themed Advent service. Dan found the course not only deepened his understanding of church music but also equipped him to help connect choir and congregation more effectively.

He said: "It's about bridging the gap between the choir and the wider community while honouring the past and shaping the future of worship."

For Dawn Davidson, a lifelong musician and choir member, the course provided reassurance and renewed purpose during a time of change in her parish.

She said: "I wanted to understand more about how music fits into worship and how to choose hymns that reflect the church's seasons."

The course offered practical and theological insights, from singing sessions and simple harmony to the history and development of church music.

Dawn said she came away with greater confidence and a much deeper understanding of how music supports worship. She also valued the opportunity to learn alongside others from across the diocese, sharing ideas and experiences.

Mark Rowland felt called to explore ALM as a natural next step in his vocation, particularly within chaplaincy.

He said: "I have long sensed a heart for pastoral care, especially in places where people experience stress and uncertainty."

**Dawn Davidson**

The course helped him develop skills in listening, prayer and what he described as “intentional presence” — being fully attentive and available to others.

Now serving at Gatwick Airport, Mark is already putting this into practice. He said: “Even quiet moments of listening and reassurance can be part of God’s work. The course has deepened my faith and rooted me more firmly in a vocation of presence.”

Leonie Wells, a pastoral intern at St Andrew’s Church, West Tarring, chose the pastoral ministry pathway alongside her work with children and families. Inspired by her professional ambitions and personal experience of church support during bereavement, she found the course practical and deeply meaningful.

She said: “One session on grief and loss was particularly impactful, offering guidance on supporting people through bereavement. It has deepened my faith and affirmed my commitment to offering compassionate support within our parish.”

**Leonie Wells**

The breadth of ALM opportunities continues to grow. A new prospectus is now available, featuring 12 electives and 17 courses, including new options in children’s ministry and leading intercessions.

This wide range reflects the many ways lay people are serving and leading in their own areas.

Alongside ALM, the newly refreshed Bishop’s Certificate has captured the imagination of people across the diocese, with nearly 90 participants in its first year. The year-long course offers an accessible and engaging introduction to Christian faith, exploring the creeds and both the Old and New Testaments.

Greg Moore, officer for lay ministry and training, said: “Each session mixes worship, discussion, reflection and small group learning. There are no exams or essays, just an opportunity to grow in understanding, confidence and connection with our faith and each other. For many, it has been both educational and transformative, giving a renewed sense of purpose. The sense of fellowship is profound.”

**Mark Rowland**

Participants consistently describe the course as open, welcoming and thought-provoking, creating space to explore big questions in a supportive environment.

Course leader Arwen Folkes has been encouraged by the depth of engagement she has witnessed.

She said: “It was a privilege to spend the day with participants on the Bishop’s Certificate. I was struck by how fully everyone brought themselves into the process — exploring, sharing, and growing together. The course is both thorough and welcoming and it is wonderful to see so many people given the opportunity to explore their faith in such depth.”

Together, these programmes indicate a flourishing culture of learning, service and discipleship across the Diocese of Chichester. With increasing numbers, a wide range of pathways and growing participation from younger people, there is clear momentum as individuals step forward to serve God and their communities in new and meaningful ways.

WE HEAR YOU

Popular service hopes to expand



It is one year since the first Hear Here clinic opened in the Diocese of Chichester.

This is a service which began in the Diocese of Guildford more than ten years ago. NHS-trained hearing champions run monthly clinics for those who wear NHS hearing aids. The clinics operate from churches generally alongside a coffee morning. People can have hearing aids and ear moulds checked, have tubing replaced and collect a supply of batteries as well as meet others from their area so it is a social opportunity as well as a hearing aid maintenance service.

There are more than 60 churches in the Diocese of Guildford which participate but at present only one in the Diocese of Chichester, St Anne's in Church Road, East Wittering.

It takes place on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 11am to noon and is run by hearing champion Maureen Warwick, assisted by Barbara Blundell who meets and greets and Rosie Hills who presides over tea, coffee and biscuits.

The aim of Hear Here is to provide an NHS hearing aid maintenance service for hearing-impaired people in their own area, thus avoiding a long or difficult journey to a hospital audiology department. The service also benefits the hospitals because it frees up appointments for those who need hearing tests or have more complex hearing needs.

The clinic is also a way of sharing God's love, welcoming those with a disability and widening the outreach of the church.

Since opening the clinic at St Anne's, 53 residents have registered, some have visited for help or advice several times during the year and each month new people register.

Over the course of the year Maureen has been able to assist on some 60-plus occasions either by carrying out simple maintenance or giving advice on what specialist equipment is available and where to obtain it. She can advise on items such as smoke alarms and door bells specifically for the hearing impaired and, when necessary, sign language or lip reading classes.

It takes place on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 11am to noon

If the need arises Maureen will refer people back to the hospital for more specialist attention. This may be because their ear moulds no longer fit properly or the hearing aid develops a fault or is broken.

The diocesan disability team agrees there is a need to expand Hear Here across the Diocese of Chichester.

Maureen said: "Obviously this can't happen overnight and there will be a lot to be organised first. But if you want to see this mission growing in our diocese and feel it is something you would like to see in your church, I encourage you to get in touch and together we can make it happen."

Contact Maureen by emailing maureen.warwick1@btinternet.com or call 01243 671899.

Growing faith

Confirmations on the rise!

Across the Diocese of Chichester, we have recently seen a notable increase in confirmations, with several parishes reporting especially strong numbers as people of all ages affirm their faith. Nearly 600 people were confirmed in 2025.

Churches in coastal, rural and urban settings alike have celebrated full services, with candidates ranging from teenagers to those discovering faith later in life. Clergy have spoken of a renewed sense of encouragement as congregations gather to support those taking this significant step.

In Crawley 50 candidates were confirmed by Bishop Will recently and Bishop Ruth led joyful Confirmation services at St Peter's Brighton and in Storrington.

Bishop Ruth said: "The living Lord Jesus is always wonderfully at work, calling people in every community to put their trust in Him, across every possible background and at every stage of life. We



see this glorious reality at each service of confirmation in the diocese, and it is so tremendously encouraging!"

Acting Bishop of Chichester, Will Hazlewood, added: "Each confirmation tells a story of journey and transformation. It is a

privilege to walk alongside candidates as they publicly affirm their faith and become more deeply rooted in the life of the Church."

These celebrations offer a hopeful sign of spiritual growth across the diocese.



RACIAL JUSTICE WORK:

Hope, Partnership, & Practical Action

The Diocese of Chichester continues to deepen its commitment to racial justice through worship, teaching, and practical action, with Diocesan Racial Justice Coordinator Vitalis Ngwambi playing a key role in shaping this work.

Over the past year, Vitalis has developed the Diocesan Racial Justice Toolkit while building partnerships across Sussex and beyond. He has delivered Racial Justice training and presentations across a wide range of diocesan contexts, including the Hurst Clergy Deanery Chapter, Arundel and Bognor Deanery Synod, Brighton Deanery Synod, Dallington Deanery Synod, Hastings

Clergy Deanery Chapter, Chichester Clergy Deanery Chapter, the Diocesan Vocations Day, and the Diocesan Environmental Day held in Bexhill in May.

Racial Justice Sunday, which took place earlier this year, was marked across the Diocese with prayer, reflection, and community engagement. At Chichester Cathedral, Vitalis preached a powerful sermon calling

Christians to a practical expression of love: standing with those who suffer injustice, welcoming the stranger, and examining our own assumptions. Parishes across Sussex reflected this commitment through creative local events, including multicultural worship, shared meals, and teaching on the history and legacy of slavery. At St Luke's, Brighton, contributions from

the diocesan Anti-Modern Slavery Ambassadors and Professor Alan Lester (University of Sussex) helped connect local action with wider national work, including the Church of England's Project Spire.

A significant milestone in this journey has been the launch of the Diocesan Racial Justice Toolkit at St John the Evangelist, Brighton, in March this year. Organised by Vitalis and attended by Bishop Rosemarie Mallett (Lead Bishop for Racial Justice), Bishop Ruth, Professor Alan Lester, who gave a powerful presentation, clergy, and parish representatives. The event celebrated a shared commitment to move from intention to action.

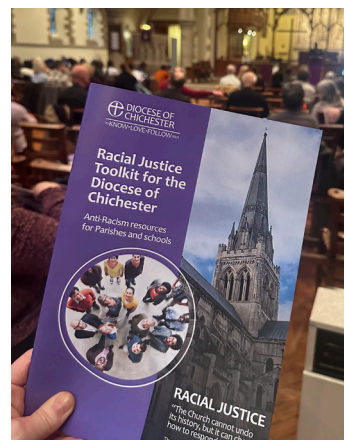
The toolkit, commended by Bishop Rosemarie as “a valuable resource,” offers a practical framework for embedding the Diocese's racial justice strategy across churches, schools and communities helping them to engage with racial justice, drawing on the national “From Lament to Action” agenda.

Vitalis, who also worked on the Church Commissioners' communications pilot resources for churches, emphasised the collaborative nature of this work: saying: “It takes a whole diocese to bring racial justice to full realisation.

“The recent Church of England Racial Justice Focal Point gathering in

Leicester, brought together those leading and working on racial justice across the Church of England. It was convened by Canon Guy Hewitt, Racial Justice Director for the Church of England, to assess and strengthen the Church's racial justice work, share good practice from across dioceses, and explore how we can work collaboratively with senior diocesan leadership to embed racial justice more deeply within the life, mission, and structures of our dioceses.”

He added: “We are currently partnering with several organisations and networks to strengthen intercultural ministry, inclusion, and community engagement across the Diocese. These include the Zimbabwe National Anglican Fellowship for Intercultural Worship, Brighton and Hove Black History for Black History Month initiatives, Gypsies, Roma and Travellers Friendly Churches, and the University of Sussex International Student Office.



The toolkit is now available via the **diocesan website**, supporting churches across Sussex in embedding justice, dignity, and reconciliation in their life and mission.

Next projects:

Develop stronger partnerships with schools and churches across the Diocese to support them in embedding racial justice through training, resources, and ongoing engagement.

Establish a diocesan racial justice database to help strengthen communication and collaboration

Coordinate and support Black History Month activities across the Diocese, creating opportunities for education, reflection, celebration, and community engagement.

Organise a Racial Justice Exhibition highlighting the stories, experiences, faith, and contributions of Global Majority Heritage communities within the Church and wider society.

RAISING OUR VOICES FOR CREATION



Some 70 people, lay and clergy, from churches across the diocese and beyond gathered for the Diocesan Environment Day at St Peter's Church Community Centre, Bexhill, in May.

Several other denominations were represented, with one person travelling from Somerset and another from Canterbury.

The day opened with worship headed by Rev Zoe Eborn, curate at St Peter's, who led the church's inspiring young choristers drawn from local schools. Their rendition of John Rutter's For The Beauty Of The Earth provided a fitting and uplifting start.

Polly Eaton, eco diocese officer at A Rocha UK, followed with a compelling and urgent message about the need to raise our voices for the sake of God's creation. She spoke passionately about the climate crisis and the role each of us can play, saying: "We don't have to do it all but we all do need to do something."

A wide range of workshops helped participants explore practical ways to engage with environmental stewardship. Topics included net zero buildings, climate stewards, Eco Church awards, communicating about the climate crisis, race, climate and survival, a meditative walk in St Peter's churchyard, caring for oceans, seas and rivers, and a fundraising display from the Friends of St Nicholas' Children's Centre in Nakuru, Kenya.

Gareth Martin, Diocesan Net Zero Carbon Officer, said: "Climate change is a major threat to God's creation and the interconnected world on which we all rely. The Environment Day was an excellent opportunity for us to share experience across the Diocese in how we can respond to the climate challenge. One tangible action is to improve the heating and lighting in our church buildings which, as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change, can make them more comfortable and welcoming. Such practical actions can be visible demonstrations to our local communities of hope in the future."

“We don’t have to do it all but we all do need to do something.”

Judith Rigby, of St Michael and All Angels Church in Bexhill, said: “It was a fantastic day. It helped me to understand my carbon footprint and also to understand the struggles with our global neighbours. There was much to take away.”

John Huggins, an ordained member of St Leonard’s and St Lukes, Seaford, said his interest

in Eco Church lay in his concern about the climate crisis and a belief that Christian theology calls us to be active in engaging constructively with the problem.

John has completed research about why a subset of Christians are involved and active in this area, with his sights set on a university PhD and a book. He said the goal is to “tap into a wellspring of ideas to engage more in the church, to become active in their care and action regarding the environment, particularly focusing on the challenges currently happening because of global warming”.

He said: “I thought the Environment Day was excellent because it involved a range of talks and activities, engaging our minds, our willingness to act (with ideas on how) and our hearts. It also gave us opportunities to network, which was particularly helpful. The diocesan net zero officer was there to point the way towards help for parishes, and the ALM scheme for

training lay people to minister with an eye to the environment was also mentioned. However, I suspect that many incumbents need more help to engage with this area because past training would almost certainly not have equipped them to deal with challenges in this area, theologically or practically.”

Rev Buff Stone, diocesan environment officer, said: “As the climate and nature crisis deepens, with some of the most powerful in the world turning away from their responsibility to address the harm humanity has caused, our responsibility before God to care for all creation and especially those most impacted by catastrophic weather events, crop failures, water shortages and the loss of homes and livelihoods, increases.

“So our work to help the whole Church engage with the climate and nature crisis through prayer, action and advocacy continues.”

A Rocha UK’s Eco Church programme supports churches of all denominations to care for creation. It provides a practical framework through an online survey covering five key areas: worship and teaching, buildings and energy, land and nature, community and global engagement, and lifestyle. Churches can work towards bronze, silver or gold Eco Church awards.

Eco Church continues to grow as more congregations seek to demonstrate their love for

God’s earth. Often, it begins with a small group or even one person taking the first step. For those looking to start or develop this work, support is available through the Parish Environment Support Network in the Diocese of Chichester, led by Rev Buff Stone. This online community meets monthly, alternating between daytime and evening sessions, and offers encouragement, resources and shared learning.



ECO AWARDS CELEBRATED AT THE CATHEDRAL

Representatives from churches across the diocese gathered at Chichester Cathedral on Rogation Sunday for a special Evensong service celebrating the achievement of national A Rocha Eco Church awards.

Bishop Will preached, highlighting the Christian call to care for creation. Drawing on the imagery of Louis Armstrong's well-known song "What a Wonderful World" alongside the Genesis account of creation, he reflected on the beauty and interconnectedness of the natural world and humanity's place within it.

He reminded the congregation that while humans are made in God's image, they are also part of

creation and entrusted with its care. Referencing the growing impact of climate change both globally and in companion link dioceses such as Nakuru in Kenya, he spoke of the real consequences of environmental disruption, including flooding, for communities and livelihoods.

Despite the scale of the challenge, Bishop Will encouraged hope and action rooted in faith, emphasising that small changes in church life and individual behaviour can contribute to the restoration of God's creation. He commended the A Rocha Eco Church awards as a practical expression of stewardship and a sign of churches reconnecting with the natural world as part of their worship and witness.

After the service, church members, clergy, and cathedral and Church House

staff gathered in the South Transept for refreshments, including tea, coffee and handmade cakes, and had the opportunity to view displays of Bronze, Silver and Gold Eco Church awards and plaques brought for the occasion.

Martha Mutikani, the vicar at St Augustine's, Scaynes Hill said: "Being recognised at the Cathedral for Eco Church work was deeply encouraging for our parish team. As a Silver A Rocha Eco Church, we see this not as a tick-box exercise, but as part of our Christian calling and daily discipleship. Caring for creation is about how we live, worship, relate to our neighbours, and steward the gifts God has entrusted to us.

"What was especially meaningful was that the Cathedral chose to celebrate



REVD BUFF STONE, BISHOP WILL AND REVD MARTHA MUTIKANI WITH HER CHURCH MEMBERS, TIM, HELEN AND JENNY FROM ST AUGUSTINE'S AT SCAYNES HILL.

“We continue to work together to highlight the urgency of caring for all God’s good creation”

and recognise the many volunteers and parish communities who quietly give their time and energy to this work. So much of Eco Church ministry happens through ordinary people faithfully making a difference in their churches and local communities.

“In our parish, this work has inspired people of all ages to become more involved in sustainable community care and environmental stewardship. We already have members working closely with the wider community on sustainable management initiatives, and it has been wonderful to see how this has brought people together with a shared sense of purpose and hope.”

Seven members of the ‘Roots and Renewal’ team, and an assistance dog, were happy to represent St Elisabeth’s, Eastbourne, in the Evensong event. David Harrigan, the vicar at St Elisabeths said: “Coinciding with

Rogation Sunday, this was a great opportunity for us to celebrate our achievements on the Eco Church pathway, together with others from the diocese.

“At St. Elisabeth’s, we recognise the urgency of the climate and nature crises, and we are working to embed the Fifth Mark of Mission, “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain the life of the earth” in all our daily activities. For us, this is a practical manifestation of the two great commandments.

“Having the opportunity to celebrate together in this way was an encouragement, highlighting that, although we are many different and diverse parishes, we all share the same vision, to love God and all his good creation.”

Buff Stone, Diocesan Environment Officer said: “It was great to have so many people from so many

parishes celebrated in the Cathedral- recognising their hard work and persistence in achieving Eco Church Awards. The choir wonderfully sang Rutter’s For the Beauty of the Earth - a heartfelt cry from all of us!

“We continue to work together to highlight the urgency of caring for all God’s good creation in the midst of the climate and nature crisis which so profoundly affects us all. It’s at the heart of our calling as Christian people!”

Every church is welcome to join the Eco Church scheme- the next 6 Parish Environment Support Network online meetings are all to help us on our journey - starting with getting to Bronze, June 1st 2pm and a repeat on July 6th at 7pm) on zoom.

If you’d like to know more, email: environment.officer@chichester.anglican.org

YOU'RE WELCOME

ST. EDWARD'S

"It all began with a few of us sharing our vision"

GOLD A ROCHA AT BURGESS HILL

A church has been recognised for its environmental work after winning a national award.

St Edward's in Burgess Hill, has been awarded the Gold Eco Church Award by Christian conservation charity A Rocha UK, making it the third church in Sussex and one of just over 100 nationwide to achieve the top honour.

Helen Stephens, church relations manager for A Rocha UK, said: "Our huge congratulations to St Edward's church on their gold award.

"They are part of a movement of churches, from all denominations, who are using Eco Church to take practical steps towards caring for creation."

The Eco Church scheme helps congregations take action across five categories: worship and teaching,

buildings and energy, land and nature, community and global engagement and lifestyle.

St Edward's began its journey in 2022, achieving bronze in spring 2023 and silver in 2024.

Katy Trigg, the church's eco champion, said: "It all began with a few of us sharing our vision and passion for fulfilling the Church's mission to care for God's creation.

"We were keen to start a community garden, but also for creation care to infuse the whole of the church's life."

The church has focused on rewilding its grounds to support wildlife, successfully encouraging pyramid orchids, wildflowers, butterflies and even Great Crested Newts.

A community garden has also been established, growing vegetables for use in St Edward's Mustard Seed Café.

Vicar Rev Jules Middleton said: "We are over the moon to have achieved the gold award and it is a testament to the hard work and passion of so many who want to do more to look after the planet."

Improvements to the church building, including installing LED lighting and reducing energy use, have been part of wider efforts to lower the church's carbon footprint.

St Edward's is now fundraising to replace its gas boiler with an air source heat pump.

The Acting Bishop of Chichester, Bishop Will, also welcomed the news, saying: "I am absolutely delighted to hear that St Edward's has joined a growing number of churches that have been awarded the Gold Eco Church award."

SILVER ECO AWARD FOR CHURCH HOUSE HOVE



Church House is pleased to have recently been awarded its Silver Eco Award by A Rocha, with care for creation increasingly embedded within the culture at Church House.

Polly Eaton, Eco Diocese Officer at A Rocha commented:

“There is a clear sense that the office team at the Diocese of Chichester is motivated and engaged in care for creation. It was fantastic to see that you reached the silver threshold across all the survey categories. There were many excellent examples of practical action being taken.”

Creation care is integrated into communal worship, with monthly lunchtime diocesan

services for staff and weekly diocesan prayer meetings, where staff meet to pray for Church House and the Diocese. In the office, ethical procurement choices are made and examples include green electricity suppliers, use of Fairtrade products and a move to a paperless office. There is limited land at Church House, however staff nurture and care for the land, with a compost area, wild flowers and tree management plan in place. Sustainability and use of public transport is advocated.

Within the diocese, approximately 43% of parishes are currently either registered for or in receipt of an Eco Award, demonstrating commitment to and awareness of the

importance of care for creation, and the hope is this number will continue to rise. The award scheme is open to all parishes and is easy to register for, with a wide range of resources on the A Rocha website. Our diocesan environment officer, Rev Buff Forbes Stone, is highly knowledgeable and is glad to meet with parishes to offer support: Environment. Officer@Chichester.Anglican.Org

A ‘Care for Creation’ ALM course is available, with details on the diocesan website: Authorised Lay Ministry - Diocese of Chichester

BRONZE BEGINS HERE

As a church who has already registered with the Eco Church award scheme, we want to encourage you on your eco church journey- and get to the Bronze award level.

We already have 60 Bronze churches in the diocese, and often they find that they’re doing most of what’s needed to reach Bronze as part of their usual worship, lifestyles, care of their buildings and land and engagement with their local and global neighbours - so let’s help you get over the line!

The next online meeting is on July 6th at 7 pm (NB different zoom : <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6242685300?omn=88145910472>)

Anyone is welcome to either meeting to talk through what’s in the scheme, ask questions and hear from others about their experience of getting to Bronze.

Check it out www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk

THE LATEST IN SAFEGUARDING

By Charlie Parker - Diocesan Safeguarding Learning and Development Officer

Safeguarding isn't just about policies; it's about people; two recent events highlight how we are collectively working to strengthen our care across the diocese.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE IN MIDHURST DEANERY

Parish Safeguarding Officers (PSO) from the Midhurst Deanery recently met to share their experiences and look at best practices for keeping our churches welcoming and secure.

The day was a huge success, offering plenty of mutual support (alongside a well-deserved lunch and cake).

Support networks for Parish Safeguarding Officers are now being established across the diocese, with the goal of creating a network in every deanery.

If PSOs are interested in attending a group, or starting one in their deanery visit: <https://safeguarding.chichester.anglican.org/psosupportnetwork/>

LAUNCHING 'TRAIN THE TRAINER'

The Safeguarding team hosted its first-ever Train the Trainer safeguarding session. Led by Charlie Parker, our Diocesan Learning &

Development Officer, this program equips parish volunteers with the skills and confidence to deliver standard safeguarding training directly within their own churches.

By training local leaders to run these sessions, we are making it easier for individual parishes to keep up with training requirements.

Charlie said: "Safeguarding works best when it is rooted in the local community. The session is all about empowering our volunteers. Our goal at Church House is to provide practical support and resources so that every parish feels confident managing their safety responsibilities."

One participant said: "I really enjoyed the course, the presentation and having the opportunity to discuss it with others. It was well worthwhile."

If parishes are interested in running their own safeguarding sessions, they can visit the Diocesan Safeguarding website for details on how to register for training materials and future train the trainer sessions. More information here: <https://safeguarding.chichester.anglican.org/facetofacetraining/>



NATIONAL FOCUS: IT'S NOT JUST POLICY, IT'S PERSONAL

This local work aligns with the Church of England's new national campaign introduced by Bishop Robert Springett, Lead Bishop for Safeguarding. The campaign reminds us that at the heart of every safeguarding concern is a human being.

Bishop Robert emphasises that tools like the "Four Rs"—Recognise, Respond, Record, and Refer are not just tick-boxes. Instead, they are a framework to help us act justly and compassionately, ensuring that how we listen and handle disclosures reflects our Christian commitment to dignity and protection. Read more on the Church of England website: <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/welcome-its-not-just-policy-its-personal>



ST WILFRID'S PRIMARY CELEBRATES 75 YEARS

St Wilfrid's C of E Primary School in Haywards Heath celebrated a massive milestone: 75 years at its current home on Eastern Road! While the school originally opened in 1857 on a different site, it has now spent three-quarters of a century in its current location. To mark the big occasion, staff and pupils welcome a special guest, Bishop Ruth.

The celebrations were packed with creativity:

A Human 75: The entire school gathered on the field to form a giant human number "75" for a special aerial photo.

History on Screen: Pupils created a brilliant video looking back at the school's biggest historical milestones.

Bishop Ruth said:

"St Wilfrid's has been a cornerstone of education and faith here for generations. Seeing the energy and joy today shows its future is just as bright as its past."



WISHING OUR LEAVERS WELL

Across the diocese, the annual School Leavers Services marks a significant moment of celebration for our schools.

These services are a time for entire school communities to come together, reflect on the past few years, and celebrate the wonderful achievements of our Year 6 pupils. While saying goodbye can bring a few tears, it is a fantastic opportunity to send our leavers off to secondary school packed with blessings, confidence, and happy memories.

We wish the very best of luck to all of our diocesan school leavers as they take their next big step!

A chance to grow in understanding

Curious Christians across the diocese are exploring the big questions and rediscovering a love of learning through the Bishop's Certificate.

The year-long course invites people to engage with the creeds and delve into the Old and

New Testaments, offering a valuable opportunity for lay people to deepen their faith, discern their calling and grow in ministry.

Lay people play vital roles in the life of our parishes, from churchwardens and PCC members to worship leaders and pastoral visitors. Many are looking to develop their understanding and confidence in ministry and the Bishop's Certificate provides theological grounding, fellowship and encouragement for those exploring new ways to serve.

The course is now under way across all four archdeaconries. The first study day, led by Rev Arwen Folkes at Bishop Hannington in Hove, welcomed 85 participants from across the

diocese - an encouraging sign of the appetite for lay training.

Arwen said: "It was a privilege to spend the day with the students. I was struck by how fully everyone engaged in exploring their faith together. The Bishop's Certificate is both thorough and welcoming and it's a joy to see so many parishioners taking this opportunity."

One student described "a wonderful day, full of insight and rich discussion" while another said they appreciated the relaxed atmosphere and the chance to meet others and share ideas.

Several said they were inspired by Scripture, moved by the faith of others and encouraged by the strong sense of fellowship.

Karen Blackman from St Margaret's Church, West Hoathly, said: "It was a marvellous day of worship and learning and I'm so pleased to have attended. It was well organised with plenty of refreshments too."



Greg Moore, Officer for Lay Ministry and Training, explains: "Each session combines worship, discussion, reflection, and small-group learning, helping participants apply what they learn to everyday life. There are no exams or essays, just an opportunity to grow in understanding, confidence, and connection with God and one another. For many, the experience is not only educational but transformative."

The course will run in 2027, and details will be on the website from July. For further information, please contact Greg Moore at greg.moore@chichester.anglican.org.

Rediscovering Saint Lewinna: A Sussex Story at Bishopstone



St Andrew's Church in Bishopstone is at the centre of a remarkable Sussex story that is only now becoming fully understood.

The parish has launched the Saint Lewinna Memorial Icon Appeal to fund a traditional icon that will be placed in the church porch —thought to be one of the most likely locations within the church to have housed the original shrine of Saint Lewinna, a 7th-century virgin and martyr and the only recorded female saint of Sussex.

Although little is known about her life, her importance is clear from the fact that a shrine was established in her honour, attracting pilgrims in early medieval Sussex. Her story took an unusual turn in 1058, when her relics were stolen by a monk from the Abbey of Saint Winnoc in Flanders. This act, known as *sacra furta* (sacred theft), was recorded in detail by a monk named Drogo. His account survives in an 11th-century manuscript, *Historia Translationis Sanctae*

Lewinnae, which includes illustrated scenes from her story.

For many years, historians were unsure where Lewinna's shrine had originally been located. Several Sussex sites were suggested, all linked to churches dedicated to St Andrew. However, archaeological excavations completed around 2010, together with historical research, strongly indicate that St Andrew's Church in

Bishopstone is the most likely candidate and the one now generally accepted by contemporary historians and archaeologists involved and experienced in this line of research. Drogo's description of a minster near "Sevordt" (meaning "Sea Ford"), within sight of a harbour, matches Bishopstone closely. The parish now feels confident and justified in marking this discovery by commissioning an icon as a permanent and visible reminder of Saint Lewinna's connection to this place. Rector of Bishopstone, Fr Simon Earnshaw said: Fr Simon, Rector said:

"It is a privilege for the parish to be involved in this exciting project alongside iconographer Merna Liddawi; as we recognise and celebrate St. Lewinna's important part in the County's Christian heritage".

Earlier this year, a well-attended talk explored her story, and further events are planned. In July, the Acting Bishop of Chichester, Bishop Will Hazlewood, will visit Bishopstone to mark Saint Lewinna's feast day and to bless the new icon.

The appeal offers an opportunity for people across Sussex to take part in recognising and celebrating an important part of the county's Christian heritage. Support is welcomed both through donations to the appeal and by attending upcoming events.

Take a look at our fundraising page on Just Giving - <https://www.justgiving.com/page/st-lewinna>

Articles

BY REV CANON REBECCA SWYER



The Ark of the Covenant has a central place in the Old Testament. It was made at God's behest and to his design, as set down in the book of Exodus. Construction was overseen by Moses and the Ark held the tablets of the law inscribed with the ten commandments, Aaron's rod and a pot of manna from the wilderness.

The Ark preceded the Israelites when they were on the move and was placed in their midst when they stopped. The Ark symbolises the holiness of God, his authority and his presence with and nurture of his people.

of faith.



Through the incarnation it is Mary who becomes the Ark of the New Covenant, by whom “...the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father” (John 1.14). Through the saving actions of Jesus Christ and the grace and working of the Holy Spirit, he is in the midst of us, encountered in Word and Sacrament.

As a distinctive deacon, in the entrance procession at the beginning of the Eucharist it is my privilege to carry the Book of the Gospels in front of the priests and bishops. At the climax of the Liturgy of the Word, I bring the Book in procession into the midst of the congregation and proclaim the Gospel set for the day, ending with the words: “This is the Gospel of the Lord.”

However, as I have grown more deeply into diaconal orders over the past 34 years, being a

minister for the gospel means metaphorically holding the Gospels in front of me all the time and not only in worship.

The ordinal says deacons are “heralds of Christ’s kingdom... to proclaim the gospel in word and deed, as agents of God’s purposes of love”. Therefore, holding the Gospels before me does not just refer to preaching and teaching but to a way of living and relating. In a world - and church - that easily falls into despair and dispute, holding firm to Jesus Christ and his saving acts seems to me pivotal. He is the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end (Revelation 22.13) and nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ (Romans 8.38-39). So for me, the Book of the Gospels symbolises my call to always point to Him.

My second article of faith is rather more humble – a small notebook. I have always offered prayers of intercession but it was during 2018 where this dimension of my ministry really developed.

Some of you will know that I had breast cancer and went through a gruelling regime of treatment. I reacted very badly to chemotherapy, resulting in numerous delays, side effects

and also medication changes. I had no choice but to submit and put my trust in the medical team. As a result, I spent a significant time at home that year, feeling really unwell and unable to attend church or do much.

However, I discovered that what I could do was offer intercessory prayer and it was then that I started making physical lists of people, situations and places I wanted to pray for. Rather than necessarily asking for particular outcomes, my prayers focused on simply offering the intentions, praying and trusting that His will be done.

Nowadays, a small notebook sits alongside my daily office book and Bible. The pages of the notebook are filled with lists of prayer intentions, which are regularly updated.

These two articles of faith played a pivotal role when I was Director for Apostolic Life in the diocese. Occasionally, someone would mistakenly call me the Director of Apostolic Life and I would point out that this was the role of the Holy Spirit. Remaining focused on the gospel of Jesus Christ and offering everything and everyone up in prayer must be central to all we do.



Training for the vital volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of our PCCs and congregations. Without dedicated volunteers, parishes simply would not run.

To support parishes when new PCC trustees are elected we offer training sessions to inform and equip new trustees, secretaries and treasurers.

The feedback we have received from these sessions has been really positive, with twice as many post-holders taking up the training following last year's Annual Parochial Church Meeting as the previous year.

The intention is to equip post-holders with the governance knowledge to effectively carry out their roles. In addition, it is a valuable opportunity to allow secretaries, treasurers and new trustees to meet others and form supportive

networks as well as building connections with the parish support team and the parish advisers.

Some volunteers come with vast church experience to a new role and for some it is their first step in volunteering for their parish. Collaborative, healthy cultures are a collective responsibility to foster. We hope that knowing you have support at the end of the phone or an email will reassure more volunteers to step forward in 2026. We are really happy to support you and provide advice for any queries you may have.

This is why this year we will be coming to each archdeaconry with a roadshow to offer a listening ear (and a cup of tea) and answer your questions. We can talk to you about finance, governance, stewardship, the cornerstone generosity and grant portal, grant

The feedback we have received from these sessions has been really positive

fundraising, digital machines, the parish giving scheme and any other questions other you may have. If we don't know the answer we will endeavour to find the answer or the right person at Church House to connect you with.

Dates and times will be communicated in the PCC post-holder newsletter along with the next round of training courses. In the meantime, if you have any questions please get in touch: sarah.rogers@chichester.anglican.org or Molly. Reuter@chichester.anglican.org

Called to serve

By Holly Amoah of The Children's Society

Kate Henwood is to be officially commissioned as the Chichester diocesan ambassador to The Children's Society at the Diocesan Synod this summer.

Kate has been an exceptional ambassador since taking on the role in 2023. She brings real pride, warmth and a can-do attitude to everything she does, whether she is representing the diocese at a conference, giving a talk or supporting an event.

Her dedication and the care she shows in living out the values of the Church and The Children's Society have been clear throughout. We are delighted to celebrate this special occasion as she is commissioned.

Kate said she took on the ambassador role with "just a little trepidation".

She said: "The Children's Society, in its various forms, branding and names, is something that has always featured in my life, from the house collection box in my grandparents' home and later in my parents' and my own homes, to the annual Christingle service at our church, symbolising (for me as a small child) that it was nearly Christmas, to campaigns and adverts in publications and at church events.

"I was raised in a home where money may not have been abundant but love and security were and where I was taught that 'things' were nice to have but not necessary, while kindness and respect were essential and cost nothing.

"Growing up, we gave to charity and fundraised for many causes, including The Children's Society, wherever we could. As an adult, I became aware that giving to charity simply isn't on everyone's radar, either because there's no spare money or because people don't always know what local and national charities do and information about them isn't readily available unless they go looking for it.

"When the opportunity to become a diocesan ambassador for The Children's Society came about via Facebook in February 2023, something spoke to me. After making some enquiries, I felt it was something I could take on.

"The role description was vague. It really was an 'it's what you can make of it' role but in the three years since I said yes to the opportunity, I've travelled to both ends of Chichester Diocese (why did I have to be in such a widespread diocese?) to deliver talks to groups and churches about the work of



The Children's Society and to help promote it. I've met some amazing supporters and enjoyed many cups of tea and cake."

Kate said to be commissioned in the diocese to carry out this role was important for her, not for herself but to be able to say "here I am, Lord, use me" and to be visible across the diocese in raising awareness of the vital work The Children's Society does with the most vulnerable young people across the UK, tackling the issues that affect them every day.

She has already been making an impact across the diocese and has received many encouraging emails.

Although she will not be able to attend every Christingle in the diocese, she is keen to hear from you. If you would like to know more about The Children's Society, would like a talk, a point of contact, resources or fundraising ideas, Kate is your girl. She would love to hear from you and can be reached at tcskate.diochi@gmail.com



WHAT AN
INCREIBLE
WEEKEND AT
Maycamp

Plumpton Racecourse was filled with energy, worship and joy as hundreds of young people gathered for this year's diocesan May Camp. With inspiring teaching and honest conversations about the real issues affecting young people today, the weekend offered an opportunity to explore what it means to follow Jesus in their everyday lives.



A total of 289 young people and 97 leaders attended, with 19 groups represented from churches across the Diocese. It was especially encouraging to hear that at least 18 young people became Christians, across eight parishes in the Diocese.

The Chapel, created by Annie Compton, offered a space for prayer and reflection, with craft activities themed around Creator God, Love for the World, New Life and Be Still.

The programme also included a range of seminars, from the Justice Panel and Faith and Sport to Vocations Panel and Gaming and Faith, alongside activities such as the inflatable obstacle course, slip and slide, site-wide scavenger hunt, ultimate frisbee golf and football tournament.

Bishop Martin took part in "Grill a Bishop" on Saturday, while Bishop Ruth led the Sunday morning service and communion.

"I like the fact that the seminars explain deeper meanings of things. It puts it into a perspective of which I can understand."

It was a very hot weekend, so a huge shoutout to everyone who brought the energy and made it such a joyful occasion.

Chloe, a member of Newick parish church said: "I like the fact that the seminars explain deeper meanings of things. It puts it into a perspective of which I can understand. For example, we were talking about breathing and that being similar to God breathing with you. It just makes it so much easier to understand."

One of the main team members that puts May Camp together is Ben Sheldon. He said: "Over the history of May Camp we've seen 100s of young people come to worship Jesus and get to know him, and deepen their faith and relationship with God, and that is what May Camp is

all about – making sure we make an accessible space for young people to engage with their faith, to grow, and to deepen and to go stronger with God."

Planning for next year's Maycamp won't be far off so why not start talking to your young people now?. There will be a full report, and a video available soon for parishes to share to encourage next year's take-up.





Foot & Mouth

25 years on

By Rev Gary Cregeen

As Rural Officer for East Sussex I witness at first hand the challenges faced by many of our farmers.

Weather, markets, disease, policy decisions made far away - all of these shape daily life on a farm and all of them can generate deep anxiety. Twenty five years ago a particular crisis emerged which had a devastating impact on many rural communities, namely foot and mouth disease.

Though Sussex was not one of the most heavily affected areas, compared with Cumbria and Devon, restrictions meant livestock could not be moved, businesses were paralysed and tourism and the rural economy were badly hit.

At the time of the 2001 outbreak I was living in Cumbria and vividly remember scenes of unimaginable loss: pits of animals, the presence of the Army, entire herds wiped out and the acrid smell from pyres of dead livestock.

Some farmers suffered terribly, living with isolation and loss. Indeed for some, compensation provided an exit from an industry they could no longer sustain. Such decisions were not taken lightly. For most farmers what they do is a way of

life, passed on from one generation to another.

Farming communities live close to life and death, this is where faith matters.

The writer Robert MacFarlane said: "When we lose our sense of wonder, then we are truly lost."

Farmers, perhaps more than most, remain close to that wonder in soil, animals, seasons and stars - if we are willing to lift our heads and notice. They may not articulate belief in church language but they hold a holistic understanding of life, land and loss. They understand cycles, fragility and dependence in ways many urban communities have lost.

The 2001 epidemic resulted in more than 6.5 million animals being slaughtered. Afterwards many of us were shocked to learn that only around 0.2 per cent of the animals slaughtered during the outbreak actually had foot and mouth. However, stopping and containing the disease was a priority and killing healthy animals hurt everyone involved. Effectively, these animals were dying to protect others that might catch the disease, a terrible but (some believed) necessary sacrifice.

The laying down of life for others also happen with people, especially in wartime. With gratitude we remember each November those who made "the supreme sacrifice". And something like this happens each Easter as Christians all around the world remember the death of Jesus on the cross. He died that we might live. He willingly took upon Himself our sin and its punishment. By His wounds we are healed.

It was a terrible but necessary sacrifice, giving us hope and a future that can never perish or fade.

Rural life can be deeply rewarding but it can also be vulnerable to sudden disruption. Disease outbreaks, extreme weather, market shocks and local tragedies can place enormous pressure on farmers, families and the wider community. In the middle of this, local faith communities can offer calm presence, practical support and prayer, not least on occasions such as Rogationtide.

May we use such occasions to make supplication to God for protection, to provide and to bless and to acknowledge His goodness and our dependency on Him and to pray for and give thanks for our farmers.

A meaningful way to serve

Terry's Cross residential care home in Henfield is a Christian community offering a welcoming and compassionate environment for older people, with a particular focus on serving retired clergy and retired church workers from Christian and ecumenical backgrounds.

The trustees are now seeking new members.

The home, set in peaceful West Sussex surroundings, provides comfortable accommodation with all rooms en-suite and some overlooking the well-tended gardens. Alongside residential care, Terry's Cross offers a community where residents feel supported practically and spiritually.

Supported by the local vicar, Rev Joe Padfield, there is a Twice-monthly service in the chapel along with opportunities for prayer and fellowship, helping to nurture the Christian ethos at the heart of the home.

Residents are encouraged to feel at home, valued as

individuals and connected to a faith-filled community, which is particularly important for those whose faith has been central to their lives and ministry.

Chairwoman of trustees the Rev Christina Bennett said: "Terry's Cross seeks to be a place where Christian faith is lived out in care, compassion and community. It is a privilege to support those who have given so much in ministry and to ensure they are surrounded by dignity, respect and love in later life."

To support this vision, the trustees are looking to strengthen their board and would welcome enquiries from those with experience in social care, governance or strategic and operational leadership. This is a valuable opportunity to contribute skills and insight to the oversight of a much-valued Christian home, helping to ensure it continues to flourish for future generations.

For those exploring care options for a loved one, Terry's Cross offers a

Residents are encouraged to feel at home, valued as individuals and connected to a faith-filled community,

reassuring combination of professional care and a Christian ethos. For those considering trusteeship, it offers a meaningful way to serve.

If you feel called to this role please get in touch in the first instance with Trustees, Christine Bennett at christinamb2017@gmail.com or Lisa Williamson at lwchichester@me.com



Cash to care for our churches



There is much to celebrate across the county as Sussex Historic Churches Trust (SHCT) continues to support the care and conservation of church buildings.

The latest round of grants reflects the scale of need and the deep commitment of communities to maintain these precious places of worship and heritage.

Leading the awards this time is St Mary's, Binsted, which has received £24,000 - the largest grant SHCT has so far made to a parish church.

This significant contribution will make a real difference to the parish's ambitious programme of work. The project includes replastering and redecorating the church interior, repairing glass windows and timber in the porch and repointing the external walls.

This will all help secure the building's future and enhance its welcome for all who visit.

St Mary's also holds tiny fragments of medieval wall paintings, a reminder of the long story of worship and community life held within its walls. While not part of this particular project, they offer a glimpse into the rich heritage that efforts like this help to preserve.

Other grants awarded in this round include:

- Chichester Cathedral – £2,000
- St Catherine of Siena, Cocking – £5,000
- St Mark, Hadlow Down – £4,000
- St Augustine, Scaynes Hill – £3,000
- Holy Innocents, Southwater – £2,000

Each of these grants represents a partnership between SHCT and local churches, enabling vital repairs and improvements that might otherwise be out of reach.

Looking ahead, parishes are encouraged to support the trust's most important fundraising event of the year, Ride and Stride, taking place on Saturday, September 12.

This much-loved event plays a crucial role in making grants like these possible. Every church can take part and this need not be complicated. Simply opening your church doors and offering a warm welcome, perhaps with a sign-in sheet for participants, makes a meaningful contribution. Many churches choose to combine the day with other activities, creating a special occasion that draws in visitors and strengthens community connections.



St Mark, Hadlow Down



St Catherine of Siena,

Some parishes even organise their own Ride and Stride routes, raising funds for SHCT and for their own church. It's a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our church buildings, encourage exploration and share in a county-wide effort to care for them.

Please register your church on the SHCT website where you will also find inspiring stories and all you need to start planning the day: www.sussexhistoricchurchestrust.org.uk/

Together, through practical support and shared enthusiasm, we can ensure that Sussex's churches continue to thrive for generations to come.

Ancient village church carries out urgent roof repairs supported by Trust grant



A £7,500 grant from the Sussex Historic Churches Trust came just in the nick of time for the 800-year-old, Grade I listed church in Salehurst.

St Mary the Virgin, originally built by the Cistercian monks of Robertsbridge Abbey, is mentioned in the Domesday Book; the present building dates back to the early 13th century.

The church applied for the Sussex Historic Churches Trust grant as a matter of urgency in December after components of the wooden roof started coming loose and falling from the 12-metre-high ceiling of the church nave. The incidents included one slat falling into the congregation during a wedding – luckily into an empty pew. The fragile state of the wooden ceiling was a source of huge concern and led to two areas of the church having to be cordoned off for safety reasons.

Churchwarden Stuart Thompson said: 'We discovered that the Victorian nails had rusted and more slats were in danger of

falling. Our inspecting architect recommended we act swiftly as the nails would continue to fail, putting those below in some jeopardy – and threatening the viability – or even closure – of the Church.'

With the SHCT grant and other funds secured, St Mary the Virgin was able to press ahead with the crucial repairs. St Mary's has the longest church nave in Sussex so the project was a major undertaking, costing just over £30,000 in total.

Mr Thompson said: 'Once the scaffolding was up, it became clear that the work was being done not a minute too soon. We could see from the ground that another slat was dislodged but, once the builders could inspect the structure of the ceiling, it turned out that a total of eight slats needed replacing – all of which could have fallen at any time! The apex of the nave ceiling is 12m high so any repairs are expensive and potentially complicated.'

Even though the church's application was received some time before the next Trustees' meeting the Trust

One slat fell into the congregation during a wedding

acted quickly to award funds. Once the scaffolding was up, the builders secured the whole nave and chancel ceilings with some 2.5km of matching wooden battens – firmly nailed down either side of the wooden slats. As well as replacing the loose slats and securing the entire ceiling, the builders treated areas of extensive deathwatch beetle and woodworm damage and also painted the irons, holding the cross beams, with Hammerite.

Mr Thompson said: 'The works were complete by early March, thanks to the generous support of the Sussex Historic Churches Trust. It was a massive, unplanned, cost in the middle of our major reordering project at St Mary's – a headache the Wardens and Parochial Church Council could have done without!'

PARISH NEWS



Filling the pews through song

Music has long been at the heart of worship at St Dunstan's Church, Mayfield, whose distinguished choral and concert heritage includes hosting events for the biennial Mayfield Festival.

So when it came to the PCC deliberating on how best to engage with young people and their families in the community, it was natural that it turned to its core strength. For it was specialist Choral music for youngsters that was not catered for by any other village organisation, including the schools.

The result is Mission Through Music, a partnership between St Dunstan's and schools in the parish of Mayfield and Five Ashes

which brings high-quality, joyful music-making directly into classrooms and the wider community.

Led by the church's director of music Lucy Piercy, the project introduces pupils to singing and musicianship in weekly school sessions, followed by the chance to join the junior church choir – the Mayfield Choristers — which rehearses after school on Mondays in the church.

The choristers regularly join the adult choir in services. They have taken part in special events including a joint evensong at St Paul's Cathedral, recording for CBeebies and, most recently, performing in the Mayfield Music and Art Festival with "Ahoj! Sing For The Mary Rose", a cantata composed by Alexander L'Estrange with whom Lucy has collaborated

musically since their days at Oxford.

The choristers have also been invited to sing in Chichester Cathedral in July.

The Mission Through Music initiative dovetailed with Lucy's passion for extending the joy of music to everyone, especially the young. Her own life had been shaped by choral singing.

As a child she joined her local church choir where an inspiring director of music encouraged young people to sing and learn.

She said: "I started at the age of 11 and it completely changed my life. The tradition is amazing in the Church of England, we've got some incredible music and I really feel strongly that it should be open to our young people."



When Lucy became director of music at St Dunstan's two years ago, she found a church which had a history of young choristers but not in recent times. She wanted to revive that tradition and go further to draw in local schools.

She said: "I spent 20 years in an independent school where we had an amazing chapel choir and sang in places like St Peter's in Rome. That experience stayed with me but this kind of thing should be open to everybody."

In her first term at St Dunstan's in April 2024, she began by helping the nearby Burwash Church of England Primary school with their church service. Children then asked about joining the church choir and Lucy said: "We should be doing this with all schools."

With the support of the PCC she approached Mayfield and Five Ashes Church of England primary schools, gradually building relationships with teachers and headteachers.

She said: "Initially I went in to teach them the music they needed for their services. Then, through that, I suggested setting up an after-school choir, the choristers - and it just grew."

Lucy did not initially think of it as "mission" but, in discussing it with the PCC, it became clear this was the direction the church wished to take to encourage new families into the wider life of the church. Parents began coming to services and attending special events because their children were singing in the choir.

Lucy said: "I'm completely supportive with the mission as well. We need to fill our church with young families and people of all ages and that has started to happen."

Headteachers from nearby schools, including the Catholic Mayfield School, have since engaged with Lucy to collaborate on musical ventures or to lead harvest and seasonal projects in their own settings, spreading the benefits further across the area.

The initiative is about far more than recruiting new church choir members. At its heart lies a shared conviction that music can unlock creativity and belonging, helping children recognise their ability to contribute to something bigger than themselves.

"I like how everyone feels included. That's what I like most about singing here."

One young chorister declared that "Monday is now my favourite day of the week".

Other children said the choir has become a space where they feel safe, included and brave enough to try new things.

Molly, seven, from Mayfield Primary, said: "I like how everyone feels included. That's what I like most about singing here."

Roo, nine, from Punnetts Town Primary, said: "It's fun. I look forward to it. The more you do it, the more confident you get each time."

Some children said they were nervous but found that standing up to sing again and again built courage. One said: "My first term in the choir I was really nervous but when you do it, it just builds up your confidence and you can do it more and more."

Parents noticed big changes too. One mum said her daughter Evelyn had gained not only musical skills but also confidence and new friendships through the choir. Evelyn is a beneficiary of a bursary from the Royal School of Church Music, an award scheme that was suggested by Lucy.



Theo, a pupil at Five Ashes Church of England school, first became involved with the church through his school. His mother Sam said his love of singing has helped him build confidence.

Theo had been anxious in the past, struggling to join in school productions without becoming upset. Sam said: "Last year he went from not wanting to go into school, wouldn't join in even with a school production and now he'll join in, he'll get all excited.

"He's learned that there are coping mechanisms, which means he can throw himself out there but with safety."

Through consistent support from school staff and home, Theo now feels safe enough to take part in whole school events, including singing in the local church. He is particularly excited about performing in the upcoming "Aho!" production with ore than 100 other children.



Theo also takes part in church-linked events such as Remembrance, where he has held the flag and laid wreaths, experiences Sam said were "good for his confidence." She is not religious herself but appreciates the church as a beautiful and welcoming space for the community.

Sam said she values the way the school and church work together, seeing it as an opportunity for the wider community to come together and celebrate children's talents. She said: "I'm not religious, but I just think it's beautiful, this church here. If my children have got something on here, then one of us will come along."

Such partnership work depends, however, on local goodwill and generosity. With traditional funding avenues for school music provision dwindling, projects like Mission Through Music show how communities of faith can help bridge the gap. St Dunstan's has pledged to sustain the programme for at least three years and is now inviting others who value

the power of music to help secure its long-term future.

At a recent service, Bishop of Chichester the Rt Rev Martin Warner commended the vision and the vibrancy of the two choirs, describing them as "a living sign of what can happen when church and community sing together".

The hope now is the Mayfield model might inspire other parishes to try similar ventures, discovering, as St Dunstan's has, that mission can begin with something as simple and as transformative as a song.

Alex L'Estrange is a multi-talented writer, director, producer and conductor and has been a constant figure within the project. His longstanding links with the BBC brought about the Tiny Tunes recording for CBeebies. They are now planning for a second recording as the first has recently gone live.

If other parishes would like to know more about Mission Through Music or to see the young choristers in action, email Lucy Piercy at music.stdunstans@gmail.com

Start at the very beginning

IN THE PARISH
Michael Piercy

IN AN East Sussex village, the new Provisional Diocese of Education says that every school should be delivering a programme of Study for Music says that "Music is a universal language that has become one of the highest forms of creativity."

Reporting Key Stage 2 (children aged seven to 11), it continues: "Pupils should be taught to sing and play musically... they and perform their voices and play musical instruments." But a general lament in the article is this: an ambition or obligation.

Education budgets are stretched tight. High-quality music without care and it will stay just music. It is capable of delivering neither note nor melody. Only in larger primary schools may still recruitment include a music teacher. In smaller primaries, the presence of someone who has some training and qualification in music teaching is most probably due to just good fortune. The focus will generally be on singing and literacy (and, of course, good teaching).

But this is not to deny the desire or the need. Most head teachers would not hesitate to have in their team someone with musical training capable of filling the classrooms and corridors with joyous singing.

ST DUNSTAN'S lies in the parish of Mayfield and Five Ashes, East Sussex. Both villages have primary schools. St Dunstan's itself has a strong musical and choral tradition.



The combined choirs

and hosting many of the biennial Mayfield Festival concerts. It is an immense project. "Mission Through Music", still in its infancy, the PCC has funded the director of music at St Dunstan's to go into the two primaries with the aim of encouraging these young people to join the choral life of the church. While the Church of England needs young people, the broader aim is to introduce children to the joys of choral singing and the power of collaboration: to sing in four-part harmony, learning the rich history of music, largely, but not exclusively, that of the Church.

Additional funding through a trust has now been made available for choral activities. Just one has been granted to date. A small fee, as an incentive, is paid to the lucky recipients, who have to show commitment and endeavour, attending all rehearsals, singing with the church choir for two services a month, and learning and practicing the music.

The choir rehearsal is all correct. The choir rehearsal is all correct. The choir rehearsal is all correct. The choir rehearsal is all correct. The choir rehearsal is all correct.

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primaries near by have got wind of the project. The director of music is invited to lead harvest festivals and to work with whole and mixed-age groups. The children get far with things and music. The head teachers and music. The head teachers and music. The head teachers and music.

Tip ups: • A strong choral tradition is helpful - or the motivation to initiate a "new tradition". • A supportive vicar and PCC, and enthusiasm from local primary

lucky with after-school clubs and opportunities to learn to play. It has been reported that the choir of St Dunstan's has been invited to perform at the Mayfield Festival. They sang with the church choir at Remembrance and again at Christmas.

Music education is a hot topic in the media. We have, architecturally, aesthetically, and acoustically, some of the finest cathedrals and churches in the world. Regardless of religious belief (or the lack of it), the PCC of Mayfield and Five Ashes has struck a chord addressing a fundamental human need: music.

Mike Piercy is a retired head teacher, and the author of *Careering*, published by Troubadour (978-1-8514-481-9).

Enthusiasm and commitment are more important than ability. • Calm or better to cover well at rehearsal after a long school day. • Frequent communication with choir parents is important - as is patience when they don't reply.



Teen's appointment strikes the right note

A rural parish is showing its commitment to placing young people at its heart by appointing a 14-year-old organ scholar.

Josh Burton, who already studies piano, will begin tuition under the leadership of Simon Morris, director of music at Forest Row parish.

Simon said the appointment was an exciting step forward in the development of music and young people's participation in the life of the church. It is part of a growing dedication to nurturing musical talent and encouraging young people to take an active role in worship.

The parish includes St Dunstan's Church, Ashurst Wood, and Holy Trinity in Forest Row.

As organ scholar, Josh will be able to develop his skills in accompanying services and

supporting the choir, gaining experience that builds on the area's strong choral tradition.

Simon said: "It is a real joy to see a young musician taking up the organ in this way. The organ is at the heart of our worship and investing in young players is vital for the future of church music. Josh shows great promise and I look forward to working with him."

The appointment has been welcomed by the choir. Jonah Gater, head chorister, said: "It's really encouraging to see someone our age learning the organ. It makes a big difference having young people involved and I know that the younger children in the choir already look up to Josh, which is great to see."

Parish vicar Rev Jamie Gater said: "We are delighted to welcome Josh as our organ scholar. This appointment is not only about developing musical excellence but about recognising that young people have a vital place

in the worship and mission of the Church today. We are committed to creating opportunities for them to grow in confidence, skill and faith and this is an important part of that journey."

It comes amid a wider renewal of the parish's musical life, which includes embracing the work of SD Arts, a new arts foundation established by the church bringing high-quality performances from professional and internationally recognised musicians into village settings.

Alongside this, the parish continues to invest in its choir and in the development of young musicians, ensuring a vibrant and sustainable future for church music in the community.

Further information about the life of the parish, including its musical programme, can be found at www.frparish.co.uk.



Pevensey's Historic Church Bells Set for New Life

St Nicolas Church has stood at the heart of Pevensey since 1216. As the oldest building in the village still in use for its original purpose, it remains a living link between today's community and Pevensey's rich medieval seaport heritage. Standing proudly beside Pevensey Castle, it continues to serve the ancient parish.

The church's bells have their own long story. Originally a ring of three in the 17th century, they were recast in 1893—melted down and augmented with additional metal to create the six bells we know today.

Zoe Price, church officer, shares the latest chapter in their history.

In urgent need of retuning, the bells were carefully removed from the tower on 22 October 2025 by a dedicated team of volunteers working alongside Nicholson Engineering. It was a remarkable moment—the first time the bells had left

the tower and seen daylight since 1893.

The project even attracted attention from ITV Meridian, featuring interviews with Chris from Nicholson Engineering, Ian Clarke the tower captain, and Ken Philips, the churchwarden. Once lowered, the bells were loaded onto a Transit van, which just managed to navigate the narrow church lane, before beginning their journey to Dorset for restoration.

This once-in-a-generation project has been generously supported by individual donors and the wider Pevensey parish community. Further contributions are still warmly welcomed, particularly to support improvements to the ringing chamber, including new ropes that will make bellringing more accessible and comfortable.

The bells were expected to return in early spring, newly retuned and refreshed after

much-needed care, but the work has met delays, so it is now hoped they will return later in the summer.

When the bells do return, the team looks forward to welcoming visiting bands and new ringers alike. Anyone interested in learning to ring is encouraged to get in touch.

Updates on the project can be found on the parish website (www.pevenseyparish.org) or via the Facebook page, The Ancient Parish of Pevensey.

A final note of interest: the heaviest bell, the tenor, weighs 7 cwt 3 qtr 3 lb (approximately 395 kg). The bells also bear historic inscriptions—*Sit nomen Domini benedictum* appears on the treble, third, and fifth bells, while *Te Deum Laudamus* is inscribed on the tenor, second, and fourth.

For further information, contact Zoe Price at zoeprice27@gmail.com.

Lost in the post, found by grace

By Sheila Powell

A member of The Good Shepherd,
Shoreham Beach



A lovely letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury has shown our prayers can be answered when we are least expecting it.

In March, Rev Jane Bartlett, vicar of Church of the Good Shepherd on Shoreham Beach, blessed our prayer shawl, made for the Rt Rev Sarah Mullally ahead of her consecration as the first female Archbishop of Canterbury.

We sent it on March 24 by Royal Mail using a tracked and signed-for service, carefully packaged and correctly addressed to Lambeth Palace. However, when I checked the tracking a few days later, it said delivery had failed because “the recipient is no longer at that address” and the item was being returned to the sender.

By April 11, the tracking update said it had been returned - yet it had not arrived back with me.

After several unsuccessful attempts to contact Royal Mail by phone and online, I visited the Shoreham sorting office.

A helpful staff member discovered that the parcel had in fact been delivered to a different address in Lambeth, not Lambeth Palace, where it had been signed for. There was even a photograph of the delivery at a kitchen door.

Further attempts to resolve the issue led nowhere and even a message on Royal Mail’s Facebook page attracted only a scam response. Believing the shawl to be lost and our prayers unanswered, I was on the point of submitting a compensation claim.

Then, unexpectedly, Archbishop Sarah’s beautiful personal letter of thanks arrived.

It was a joyful reminder that prayers are not always answered in the way - or timing - we expect.

Somehow, the shawl had reached her, though exactly how remains a mystery.



OUR GROWING

global companionships

The companion links we have in the Anglican Communion continue to be an important part of the Diocese of Chichester's shared ministry and mission.

These longstanding relationships with our 11 partner dioceses in East and West Africa are expressions of mutual encouragement and shared discipleship - walking together in Christ.

This year, we are delighted to announce a significant step forward in supporting leadership development through our partnership with the Church Mission Society (CMS).

Thanks to generous funding of £20,000 from our Friends of Nakuru fund, CMS will be delivering a new programme of leadership training starting early this year, directed locally by Rev Canon Moses Bushendich.

We are deeply grateful to all who made this possible. Jon Langley from CMS has already expressed his thanks on behalf of the team and will be keeping us updated on how the project develops throughout the year. These updates will be shared across the diocese in due course.

Under the leadership of the Rt Rev Ruth Bushyager, Bishop of Horsham, the Overseas Council continues to guide the work and prayerful connections in our linked dioceses.

This year we are running a survey to ask every parish in the diocese to let us know about your links with churches, charities and projects overseas. You can find the survey [here](#) - just four questions - and we would be grateful if you would fill it in to help us map and deepen the links we have.

We also look ahead to an exciting year of interaction and celebration. The Diocese of Gambia marks its 60th anniversary of independence and we hold them - Bishop Kojo, the parishes, clergy and leaders - in our prayers during this significant milestone.

Meanwhile, plans are under way for a visit to one of our linked dioceses, to be led by Bishop Ruth and Bishop Will, and representing various diocesan groups. The purpose of the visit is to deepen our understanding and strengthen shared mission priorities, particularly in evangelism, youth and



children's ministry, Mothers' Union partnerships and environmental stewardship.

Later in the year, our annual harvest appeal will once again focus on supporting worthy projects or charities. This year we will focus on the persecuted church and we will be supporting Open Doors UK.

Your donation can equip Open Doors partners and fieldworkers as they support persecuted Christians from the hardest places on earth to follow Jesus.

Further information will be available soon but in the meantime we ask you to please pray. A prayer resource can be found here: <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/>

Through shared prayer, giving and relationship, may our companion links continue to strengthen God's mission across the Anglican Communion as friends, partners and fellow pilgrims on the way of Christ.

Summer Pilgrimage Trails

Discover the charm and history of our historic churches

This summer, why not set out on a pilgrimage a little closer to home? Across Sussex, welcoming churches invite visitors of all ages to explore, reflect, and enjoy a day out with a difference.

The Diocese's Summer Pilgrimage Trails highlights beautiful and historic churches, each offering a chance to combine discovery, fresh air, and quiet moments of reflection. Whether you come as a family, with friends, or on your own, these short pilgrim journeys are designed to be simple, enjoyable, and enriching.

The season begins at Holy Trinity, Bosham, a truly remarkable church situated alongside one of the inlets of Chichester Harbour. Steeped in history, it is said to be the place where King Canute's daughter drowned, and it even features in the Bayeux Tapestry. Inside, visitors can encounter centuries of worship, including a striking Saxon font, while outside the setting offers wide views across the harbour. <https://www.instagram.com/diocesefchichester/>

Discover the charm and history of a Saxon Church in Bosham this summer!

Holy Trinity, Bosham is a sacred site. This ancient, harbour-side church earned a spot on the famous Bayeux Tapestry and is said to be the final resting place of King Canute's daughter, who tragically drowned nearby.

Vicar, Canon Martin Lane and the Bosham community invite visitors to explore this church and discover its history, including its Saxon font. Afterward, you can enjoy a stroll along the water, stop by a local café, or find a picnic spot.

It makes the perfect short family pilgrimage. You can extend your journey by exploring neighbouring churches along the route, such as St. Mary in Chidham (less than a mile away) and St. Peter & St. Mary in Fishbourne, located back toward Chichester Cathedral.

PLAN YOUR VISIT:

- Hours: Open daily.
- Parking & amenities: A large public parking lot with public toilets is available in the village.
- Food: Bosham boasts several excellent places to eat, and on warmer

days, you'll often find an ice cream van parked by the harbour.

- Watch: Dive deeper into the history before you go with the BBC Secret Sussex video, "The unsolved mystery of a drowned princess."

Look out for other pilgrim destinations

Throughout the summer, other pilgrim destinations will be featured on the Diocesan social media channels, including Octagon Way (23 July), St George's West Grinstead (30 July), St Mary's Rye (6 August), the Cuckmere Pilgrim Path (13 August), return to Bosham (20 August), and the Chichester Pilgrim Trail over the August Bank Holiday, and St Peter Hamsey with St Peter Offham (3 September)

Wherever you begin, you are invited to step out, slow down, and discover the rich heritage and quiet beauty of Sussex's sacred places.

Why not make it a family day out - add the pilgrimage suggestions to your diary. Follow us on **Facebook** and **Instagram** to get the latest information about these and other Sussex pilgrimage destinations.

150 YEARS OF Mothers' UNION

Join us, Join in

Mothers' Union has high ideas for celebrations

By Michele White - President of Chichester Diocesan Mothers' Union

Mothers' Union has been around for 150 years and such anniversaries are a time of reflection, celebration and new - or recycled - ideas.

Idea number one came from the Central Charity at Mary Sumner House, MU's global headquarters, and has its roots in the Parable of the Talents.

Each diocese can apply for a grant of £150 with the challenge of growing it tenfold by the end of the year. The money raised for the Central Charity will be used to fund projects in Britain and Ireland and abroad.

Idea number two came from Karen Hill, our previous diocesan president, and has its roots in the ancient practice of praying in high places.

The £150 will be used to pay for a small group of willing volunteers to undertake a sponsored climb up the O2 arena, with MU midday prayers said at the summit. I suspect there will be prayer too at the base and all the way up.

The climb will take place on June 10, the same day as 150th anniversary Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral for which tickets are still available and which will also be live-streamed.

While it will be a small number of members climbing, the whole diocese can be involved through prayer and sponsorship.

Closer to home, we are also looking forward to joining in with Evensong at Chichester Cathedral on September 22 when the work of Mothers' Union past, present and future will be remembered.

There are, of course, more local celebrations to which all are welcome. Branches throughout the diocese will be busy celebrating and marking the occasion in their parishes and communities so look out for opportunities to "join us and join in".



A small group of willing volunteers will undertake a sponsored climb up the O2 arena, with MU midday prayers said at the summit.

On Mothering Sunday at St George's East Worthing, six new members responded to the challenge and branch leader Rev Sue Foster enrolled them during the service.

Joining in with the work of Mothers' Union can lead to unexpected places, including various town halls throughout Sussex, where MU members can be found welcoming new citizens with tea, cake and conversation. The dedicated teams attend the ceremonies and afterwards have the amazing privilege of sharing stories of journeys to British citizenship, many of which have been long and costly.

Reflecting on the importance of this ministry Maria Greco, co-ordinator of the Brighton ceremonies, said what she values most is "the sense of community that it brings to all of us who get together on a happy occasion. Coming from all different parts of the world we celebrate together in a sense of unity and international co-operation and love which is so needed in these difficult times".

Celebrating 150 years is not only about a list of events to attend or an amount of money to be raised, it is primarily about giving thanks to God for the vision of one woman who sought to grow His Kingdom through daily



touching as many lives as possible for Him.

May we all share that vision and determination as we serve God in our families, parishes and communities.



The Sussex Charity for Children
Since 1890

RICHARD BICKERSTETH, CHAIRMAN OF TRUSTEES, CEO MARTIN AUTON-LLOYD AND SHOP MANAGER GEMMA BARTLETT WELCOME EASTBOURNE MAYOR MARGARET BANNISTER AND THE ACTING BISHOP OF CHICHESTER, WILL HAZLEWOOD, TO JOIN THE CELEBRATIONS AND FORMALLY CUT THE CAKE.

SHOP IS A BLESSING

Family Support Work's Eastbourne charity shop is celebrating ten years of giving back to the community.

Acting Bishop of Chichester, Will Hazlewood, marked the occasion with a prayer of thanksgiving and a blessing for the shop's service and for FSW's wider work supporting families across Sussex.

FSW is a faith-motivated charity, working with families of all faiths and none. Rooted in Christian values and in partnership with the Diocese of Chichester, it offers practical support to those in need.

CEO Martin Auton-Lloyd said: "Our Eastbourne shop is a vital part of our fundraising. We're so grateful to everyone who donates, volunteers, and shops with us. You'll find quality and value all under one roof, from clothing for all ages to toys, books, homeware and more."

SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Family Support Work supports families in many ways. There is the intense one-to-one support from a Practitioner, and there is also the food bank and holiday activities.

Alongside this, quietly every week, with the support of many of the Churches in the Diocese we run a range of groups meeting families informally, having simple conversations with a mum, or offering support -through a network that understands the challenges they face.

In Peacehaven Phillipa, Phillipa Fleming is our Family Support Practitioner for Lewes and Seaford Deanery runs a mother and baby group with children up to two years old. Mothers attending this may well have been part of the Mother Nurture programme that she runs in the area- a programme that supports new mums in the early months of motherhood.

Dominique and Becky run a Bereavement group, Forget-me-not, covering Horsham and Crawley. This focuses on children who have lost a significant adult from their life. Meeting fortnightly for activities and with time to be quiet and share concerns. This brings together young people who are often overlooked after the death of a loved one.

Across the Diocese, we have several groups where the focus is on supporting families and children when special educational needs are part of everyday life. In Worthing we now run a monthly after-school club where the focus is very much on the children with additional needs, although their parents and siblings are welcome too.

The groups take on many forms, from a drop-in with coffee to a session with themed activities such as crafting and a simple meal. Their purpose is to help families build resilience; by developing a network in the local community, friends who face the same challenges or at least understand what family life is like. Whilst there is always the opportunity to have a private conversation with the FSW Practitioner the groups are often a place where troubles can be forgotten for a short while.

Many of the groups are run in partnership either with local churches or organisations such as Home-Start and Hope. Working together with other organisations allows us to reach more families than we could on our own. The coming together of organisations like this allows us all to make our precious resources stretch further.

If your Church or organisation would like to know more about working together to support the families across Sussex do contact us, we are all stronger when we work together.



BOOKS AND REVIEWS

CALLED THROUGH CANCER

Vocation, Vulnerability and the God Who Holds Us

By Lisa Barnett

I felt very privileged to be asked to proofread Lisa Barnett's new book *Called Through Cancer*. For those of us who know the author it is very easy to recognise her distinctive voice – one full of warmth, humour and tonality – running through the book at every stage, something that is reflected both in the autobiographical but also in the more theological sections.

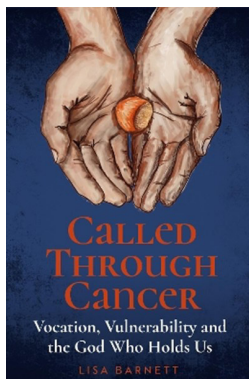
Accordingly, she writes with searing honesty about events that include the traumas and uncertainties of her cancer diagnosis, the effects of powerful and highly intrusive medical intervention and the consequences of all this for life with a husband and a young family. Lisa's theological reflection on her experience, although profound and always rooted in relevant scriptural passages, is expressed in simple, straightforward and engaging ways.

Very often we can say in a slightly glib way that God's strength is made perfect in our weakness (cf. 2 Cor 12.9) but this is a work that helps us to see a case study of such a process actually happening in a particular life that is open to God's call in and through the most testing of circumstances.

I wonder whether this book may in time become a bit of a classic of Anglican spirituality but, in the short term, I commend it wholeheartedly for personal or group study at any level. My prayer and expectation is that it will help readers to confront their own challenges – sometimes as great but normally much smaller – with similar faith and fortitude, to hear the voice of Jesus encouraging us and to know that we are held by the everlasting arms.

Review by Dean of Chichester Edward Dowler

Publisher: Canterbury Press, Norwich £11.99 ISBN: 9781786227461 128pp. (Available from July 31)



CANTICLE OF CREATION

downloadable music album

By Simon de Voil

Simon de Voil's contemplative album *Canticle of Creation*, now available through Wild Goose Publications, invites listeners into a deeper awareness of God through the living world. Originally created during the Covid-19 pandemic, the music reflects a time of vulnerability, ecological concern and renewed attention to prayer and community.

Rooted in the spirituality of Celtic saints and contemporary contemplative practice, the album offers gentle, prayerful songs shaped by themes of listening, care for creation and connection with the more-than-human world. De Voil describes the music as a source of grounding and healing during uncertain times, inspired by moments of resilience and grace found in both people and place.

Blending voice, guitar, piano and strings, the album draws on influences from ancient chant to modern devotional music. It sits naturally within the Iona tradition of linking spirituality with justice, peace and care for the earth.

Review by XXXXX

Canticle of Creation is available now as a downloadable digital album via www.ionabooks.com, (£9.50)



STARS IN THE SAME FIRMAMENT

Discovering St Francis' Interfaith Contemporaries

By Andrew D Mayes

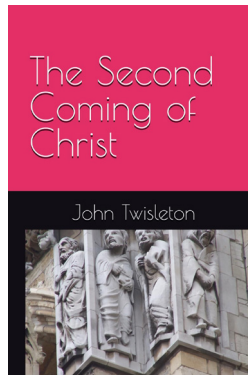
Marking the 800th anniversary of Francis of Assisi, Andrew Mayes offers a timely resource for Abrahamic interfaith dialogue and scriptural reasoning. Inspired by Thomas of Celano's image of Francis as a new light in dark times, Mayes presents 13 near contemporaries - four Christian, five Jewish and four Muslim - who shone in the same spiritual "firmament".

Without forcing connections, he explores their complementarity, tracing cross currents of mysticism, scholarship and practice across the 12th and 13th centuries. Drawing on Francis's encounters with Islam in Spain and Egypt, and with the Jewish presence in Italian cities, Mayes combines historical insight with imaginative reflection on how dialogue might have deepened.

Each chapter includes searching questions, plus an appendix modelled on Jerusalem interfaith engagement. A rich yet accessible study, it nourishes mind and heart while encouraging compassionate service, contemplative depth and courageous witness in anxious times.

Review by Canon Dr John Twisleton

Resource Publications, £16 ISBN 979-8385273003 164pp



THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

By John Twisleton

The Second Coming of Christ opens up a grand vision of the future in which creation and history are fulfilled. Science and faith together affirm that the universe has a beginning, but Christianity possesses a revelation of its end when evil is finally overcome and God's purpose for the world is completed at Christ's return.

In this booklet John Twisleton outlines how for the Church, the Second Coming signifies the perfecting of the Body of Christ and the fulfilment of unity among believers across time and denominations. For individuals, this hope calls forth repentance, faith, and perseverance, reminding believers to live life in the light of eternity with expectation of heaven.

This booklet is a key source for Fr John's Premier Radio series available to listen to again at premier.plus/secondcoming or <https://twisleton.co.uk/broadcasts/>

Amazon £4.99 ISBN-13: 979-8270334154 60pp

Cathedral News

A MUSICAL MILESTONE

Chichester Cathedral is celebrating a major milestone as its 950th anniversary fundraising appeal for music tops £1 million.

Launched in 2025, the match-appeal has drawn an extraordinary response, with more than 2,000 supporters contributing and unlocking a full £950,000 in pledged match funding.

The achievement forms part of a wider vision to secure the cathedral's musical future through the Platinum Endowment Trust for Music, established in 2023 with a goal of raising £5 million by 2026. Once complete, the endowment is expected to meet around half of the cathedral's annual music costs, including essential support for choristers and the continuation of a centuries-old choral tradition.

For the cathedral, this milestone is both a moment

of gratitude and a call to keep building. Music remains central to its life - shaping worship, drawing people together and offering young people transformative opportunities. Attention now turns to the next phase - raising further funds to expand the endowment and ensure this living musical tradition continues to flourish for generations to come.

For those passionate about choral music, tickets are now on sale for the Southern Cathedrals Festival 2026, taking place in Chichester from July 16 to 19. The festival brings together the combined choirs of Chichester, Salisbury and Winchester cathedrals for four days of concerts, recitals and services in the cathedral and venues across the city centre.

Two headline concerts form the centrepiece of the festival. On Friday, July 17, at 6.30pm, Wesley,



Parry and Brahms explores Romantic and Anglican choral repertoire, while on Saturday, July 18, at 6.30pm, Vivaldi, Copland and Hussey culminates in the world premiere of a newly commissioned work by Christopher Hussey, set to a text by Rowan Williams, alongside Vivaldi's Gloria and music from Purcell's King Arthur. To book tickets, visit southerncathedralsfestival.org.uk



LEARNING, LECTURES & STUDY DAY

A new programme of events organised by the cathedral's Canon chancellor, the Rev Dr Earl Collins, has been announced, with booking available via the Cathedral website chichestercathedral.org.uk

Study Day, Wrestling with God (June 30 or July 14): A reflective and engaging day that takes some of the most searching questions of Christian faith seriously. Designed for anyone who is curious, thoughtful or simply wanting to explore the foundations of Christian belief more deeply, the day combines accessible

teaching with open conversation. No prior knowledge is needed and there is no expectation to arrive with ready-made answers. (£5)

The Chancellor's Autumn Lectures: This year's series (September 22, October 6 and 20, November 3) explores the rich interplay between art and faith. Building on Chichester Cathedral's long tradition of engaging with sacred art, these lectures will reflect on how artists across the centuries - from the creators of early icons to modern figures such as celebrated

artist and printmaker John Piper - have sought to express the divine through colour, form and imagination. (£10)

Autumn Retreat, "Stop looking and start seeing": At this event on October 16 at George Bell House, largely spent in silence, we invite participants to step out of the intensity of their life and to come on a contemplative journey with Thomas Merton using the Bible, his writings and his photography as our guide. Day (£55) and residential (from £160) options are available.

Worship, welcome and celebration

All are invited to the cathedral at 10am on Sunday, June 14, for a Sung Eucharist for the Feast of Saint Richard of Chichester, where the Dean of Chichester, the Very Rev Dr Edward Dowler, will preside and preach.

This welcome extends beyond the cathedral building with SussexFest on the Cathedral Green from 11am to 4pm. This is a free community celebration marking the Feast of Saint Richard, Sussex Day and everything that makes our city and county so special.

A wide range of organisations will deliver hands-on activities and interactive experiences throughout the day. Participants include Fishbourne Roman Palace, Chichester Library, The Novium Museum, Chichester Festival Theatre and JAM Café. They are joined by the Festival of Chichester, Tangmere Aviation Museum, Henry Adams, Stonepillow, LifeCentre, Home-Start and Chichester Rotary.

Visitors will also have the opportunity to observe Chichester Cathedral's resident peregrine falcons through a telescope, offering

a rare and memorable insight into one of the city's most wonderful wildlife features.

Expect an uplifting mix of live performances from community choirs, dance groups and community artists, creating a vibrant atmosphere at the heart of the city, and experience a selection of local food traders who will be serving throughout the event, including E&J Syrian Cuisine, Whisk Art, Crepe Britain and the Cloisters Kitchen and Garden at Chichester Cathedral.

HYMNS WITH REV NEVILLE MANNING

IT IS WELL *With My Soul*

WHEN PEACE LIKE A RIVER ATTENDETH MY WAY

It is often fascinating to discover the stories behind some of the hymns we sing. This is particularly true of this one, both in reference to the words but also to the origin of the accompanying music. This hymn, often found in older hymn books, was written by Horatio Gates Spafford in 1873 after great family tragedies.

He wrote: "When peace like a river attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll; Whatever my lot Thou hast taught me to say, 'It is well with my soul!'"

His young son died when their family home in Chicago was reduced to ashes in 1871. Around that time four daughters perished in a boat which sank, with only his wife surviving.

In the midst of it all Spafford was moved to write the words of this hymn, affirming his belief in an all-living and never-changing God, in spite of all that had happened. Often in these articles there is only a brief mention of the tune and composer. In this case a little more is called for. The tune is

by Philip Bliss (often referred to as P P Bliss), a man who, like Horatio Spafford, also faced tragedy.

On December 29 1876 Bliss and his wife were travelling on a train over a bridge which collapsed. The train was hurled into the ravine below and the coaches caught fire. Bliss tried to save his trapped wife but died in the attempt. So several tragedies are linked with this hymn. The hymn's closing verse is especially poignant: "No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life, Thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul."

There are quite a few biblical passages which the hymn brings to mind. There are the Psalms, such as Psalm 46 v1-3: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, and the mountains quake with their surging."

There are also the stories of Jesus stilling the storm on the Lake of Galilee, such as Mark 4 v35-41, with its message of the Lord who is with us in the storms of life, whatever they may be. In a society where families struggle with daily bills and a world where many are caught up in ongoing conflicts it means a great deal to know that we are not alone in the storms of human life.

As I put these words together, some time ahead of publication, there are plenty of stormy situations around the world leading to a great deal of anxiety. By the time you read all this there may be many other stormy situations around but the message of the hymn is that Christ is still Lord in the storms of life. Perhaps Horatio Spafford would also have been aware of the promise of Jesus in John 14 v27: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you."

THE SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF WALSINGHAM



GAUDETE

LEAPING FOR JOY!

YOUTH PILGRIMAGE

MONDAY 3RD - FRIDAY 7TH AUGUST 2026

COME & JOIN THE CHICHESTER DIOCESE GROUP!

Only £245 including food, travel & T-Shirt



The Youth Pilgrimage is a week of lively worship, teaching, fellowship and fun for 11-18 year olds. Pilgrimage has been taking place in Walsingham since the Middle Ages and the week brings it alive, making it relevant to young people in today's world. The traditional pilgrimage devotions are presented in an up-beat, lively and enjoyable way, so young people can relate to them and take their experiences back to their home parishes.

For further information about the Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage visit:

www.trybooking.com/uk/GCWL

A prayer for Vacancy in See

We begin this journey of discernment in prayer, and we will keep praying. We invite all members of the diocese to join with us in prayer. Here is a special prayer for the diocese at this time:

Almighty God,
giver of every good gift:

We thank you for the faithful ministry of
Bishop Martin.

As we seek a new bishop to serve our
household of faith,
send your Holy Spirit to deepen our trust in you,
and to guide all those who will discern
the person you are calling;
that we may know, love, and follow
Jesus, today and always
Amen.