



Diocese of Chester

archdeacons' visitation news

Dear Churchwardens

Warm greetings to you again – this time with Jane Proudfoot newly appointed as Archdeacon of Macclesfield. The two of us are looking forward immensely to working together and to serving all of you in your vital role of leadership in the parishes.

It is good to be able to share Archdeacons' Visitation News with you once again. As before, we are grateful to Ecclesiastical Insurance for covering the cost of this. We hope you will find helpful guidance here, including from within the Diocese of Chester.

We are at a really important time of change in our diocese. In particular, we have been discerning together a fresh vision for where God is leading us now and in the future, and developing a strategy to underpin that vision. Many of you will have taken part in the consultation process which took place across the diocese as we reflected and sought God's guidance together.

The vision we discerned together is that, in the Diocese of Chester, we are to be 'Together in Christ, sharing hope'. We are called to be united in following Jesus in everyday life, and we are called to share the hope he gives us with others. Over the last few months, we have often been challenged to think about how what we do as the church really impacts on the lives of the 1.5 million people who live within the diocese and who do not, as yet, have regular contact with any Christian church. Christ loves every one of those people, and died for them. Reaching out to our communities in the love of God should be at the heart of what we do as the local church.

The strategy which is emerging in the diocese will include helping congregations focus on mission, enabling churches to be as inclusive as possible of people of all ages and backgrounds, encouraging the planting of new worshipping communities, and developing the kinds of leadership we need.

But in all of this, the focus will remain on the local – helping parishes to engage with their communities, building on the great strengths which already exist and the great things you and your congregations are already doing. We are looking forward to working with you at this exciting time.

Thank you once again for your wonderful ministry as Churchwardens in the diocese.



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Churchwarden Training

Saturday 13th July – For New Churchwardens – Church House

Saturday 12th October – For All Churchwardens – St John's Church Hall, Lostock Gralam

Details of how to book are on the diocesan website under the Events section for July and in the E-Bulletin. October to appear nearer the time. Booking is essential for catering purposes.

Any questions, please contact: Laura Howard: **01928 643435** or Deb Toole: **01928 643420**

After your APCM, please ensure your parish updaters update CMS with correct contact details. If you have problems or if you require further assistance, contact Ruth Laemmel: **01928 643446** email: ruth.laemmel@chester.anglican.org or Emma Hathaway: **01928 643424** email: emma.hathaway@chester.anglican.org

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A New Ministry Team at Church House

After a year with several vacancies, January saw the start of a newly formed diocesan Ministry Team. Four new members of staff joined the existing team of four, based at Church House and working closely with additional volunteer team members.

The team's work covers a range of activities seeking to encourage, equip and develop the calling of all God's people to live out their faith in the world and the church, including discernment, selection, training and ongoing support for those in a wide variety of lay and ordained ministries.

That includes:

- Vocation and discernment for ordained and licensed lay ministers
- Women in ministry
- Spiritual accompaniment
- Curate training
- Pastoral Worker ministry
- Reader ministry
- Resourcing leadership and discipleship
- Self-supporting ordained ministry
- Ministerial development review
- Healing ministry
- Deliverance ministry

One recent development is a collaboration with the Finance and Safeguarding Departments, alongside the Archdeacons' Office, to offer particular **resource and support to parishes in vacancy**. This might include provision of PCC training in the area of Clergy Wellbeing, so that a parish is best placed to welcome a new incumbent, or it could be offering support for licensed lay ministers in a vacant parish.



The team are working on a range of other projects, with some key current projects being:

A rebranded **Foundations for Ministry programme**. This will run in two 10-week blocks from September 2024, in venues across the diocese. FfM is a course of learning for anyone who wants to become better equipped to serve God in the world and the church. People join to learn more about a variety of ways to serve, including in the workplace, the home and the community, as well as roles within church (Churchwarden, PCC member, administrative work, music ministry, pastoral work, outreach) and licensed or ordained roles.

For those who find themselves leading worship on an occasional basis, and not feeling called to licensed or ordained ministry, we offer a short course in **Leading Public Worship**, which is part of the process of becoming a locally authorised Occasional Worship Leader (yes, an OWL!). This course runs twice a year in spring and autumn.

Another priority for the whole team is the **growing of new vocations** to a variety of ministries. We are in no doubt that God is calling people across the diocese to join in the work of sharing God's love with the 1.5 million who do not yet know Jesus. For some, this will mean exploring a sense of vocation to licensed or ordained ministry, or supporting and encouraging someone else as they explore this. Do join us in prayerful expectancy as we discern the work of God among us, and do be open to the possibility that God might be calling you or someone you know to serve in new ways.

The full team are:

Jane Gerrard and **Jane Hood**, Executive Assistants

Karen MacMillan and **Jeanette Howe**, Bishop's Advisers for Licensed Lay Ministers

Richard Walker, Bishop's Adviser for the Diocesan Discernment of Ordained Ministry

Jenny Bridgman, Bishop's Adviser for Curate Development and Clergy Transitions

Lyndon Bannon, Bishops Adviser for Self-Supporting Ordained Ministry

Ian Arch, Bishop's Adviser for Ministerial Development

Simon Chesters, Director of Ministry

Timothy Hupfield, Diocesan Healing Adviser

Laura Rhodes, Interim Dean of Women (standing in for **Lesley Currie**)

Elaine Chegwin-Hall, Deliverance Team Convenor

For more information on any of the above, please email:

✉ ministry@chester.anglican.org



Enhance your church's fundraising efforts

Whether you're raising funds for new facilities, building repairs, youth worker recruitment, or daily running costs, the Ecclesiastical Fundraising Hub provides resources to aid your church's growth in fundraising. This practical hub is organised into user-friendly steps, each offering information, guidance and tools, regardless of your fundraising experience.

Explore a wealth of articles, blogs and supporting documents on various topics such as digital fundraising, capital projects, understanding the grants process and forming fundraising teams. Access a free searchable list of church funders providing grants, along with tailored fundraising support for small rural churches.

Also, to support time-constrained churches and volunteers, looking for quick information on the diverse fundraising landscape, the hub offers concise, insightful bitesize videos addressing key fundraising issues. Additionally, sign up for live, free webinars conducted in collaboration with Philanthropy Company across 2024. For additional help, call the fundraising helpline below.

📞 **0345 601 9959**
🌐 **www.ecclesiastical.com/churchfundraising**



An update from grant-making charity, Benefact Trust



BENEFACT TRUST

Every day, Benefact Trust, the charitable owner of Benefact Group, witnesses the crucial role churches and charities play in our communities. Since the Trust was established in 1972, it has awarded over £256m in funding to support these organisations to thrive and make a positive

impact in society. Benefact Trust's grants support a range of causes and there are many heart-warming stories to be found on the website.

🌐 **www.benefacttrust.co.uk/news**



Nominate your church for a chance to win



The Movement for Good Awards programme is back again with grants of £1,000 and more to give to churches and charities. Ecclesiastical is proudly part of the Benefact Group, who are giving away over £1 million to churches and charities in the 2024 Movement for Good Awards.

£1,000 draws are now open for nominations

- You can nominate your church or favourite charity for the £1,000 draw.
- You can nominate as many charities as you like; it's one nomination per charity per person.

There are six £1,000 draws this year giving away between £50,000 and £120,000 in each. Once you've nominated, share your nomination, and get your friends and family to support too.

Did you know?

The Movement for Good Awards has gifted over £5.75 million to more than 2,500 charities since the initiative started in 2019.

Last year, A Rocha UK was awarded £5,000 in the Environment and Climate special draw. A Rocha UK is a Christian charity working to protect and restore the natural world and is committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment.

Also, in 2023, £11,000 was awarded to 10 church-related charities through the £1,000 Movement for Good Awards; Kilkenny Christian Centre in ROI actually won twice! So please get nominating; next time it could be your church! You can find out more at:

🌐 **www.movementforgood.com/ecclesiastical**

Contains promotional material

Would you like to sign up for e-news?

The monthly e-news is full of useful information to support you in areas such as fundraising, church security and environmental impact. Signing up is easy and you can unsubscribe whenever you choose. Many of Ecclesiastical's customers have chosen to receive this and we hope you would like to join them.

🌐 www.ecclesiastical.com/signup



Financial support for your 2025 sabbatical

Established in 1987, the Ecclesiastical Ministry Bursary Awards (MBAs) have assisted over 1,400 clergy members in funding a variety of extended leave projects.

The experience of a sabbatical can be life-changing and have a positive and long-lasting impact on your church and community. One of the 2023 recipients, the Rev'd. Heston Groenewald, vicar of All Hallows Church in Leeds, received a bursary to support his local interfaith ministry.

He visited India and Pakistan to experience and learn more about the diverse cultures and customs that make up the fabric of the local community. On his trip, Heston experienced the Holi festival in India and celebrated Easter with Christians and Muslims in Lahore.

“ The MBA grant enabled an amazing adventure around India and Pakistan and so has been a valuable, wonderful investment in my wellbeing and in my local interfaith ministry. ” **Rev'd. Heston Groenewald**

The application window for the 2025 MBA programme is now open and closes in September 2024. In 2025, we are particularly keen to see more sabbaticals which aim to support the drive for net zero carbon.

If you would like to find out more about the Awards, including eligibility criteria and application details, please visit:

🌐 www.ecclesiastical.com/mba



Invest in making a difference

Worries about social matters, our planet and the environment are factors most of us think about daily. To do more to help address these concerns, there is increasing interest from people looking to invest ethically in accordance with their principles.

What is ethical investing?

Richard Wood, Director of Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services (pictured below), explains, “Put simply, ethical investments allow people to invest without sacrificing their environmental, social, moral or religious principles while at the same time aiming to make a profitable return.”



Ethical investment funds can be screened using negative or positive criteria. For negatively screened funds, the fund manager will, for example, be screening investments to avoid a range of activities considered harmful – such as companies involved in manufacturing tobacco.

When using positive screening, fund managers actively identify companies that make a positive

social impact or who invest sustainably and/or responsibly. They will have, for example, good corporate governance and employment practices as well as being active in making a positive impact on the environment.

To find out more about ethical investing, contact Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services today.



0800 107 0190



getadvice@ecclesiastical.com



www.ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice

Please note: The value of investments can go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount you invested. Your capital is at risk.

Looking for help to go green?

Give your parishioners a warm welcome!

We all want our church buildings to be welcoming spaces for both prayer and for wider community activities, but particularly in the chilly months, keeping buildings warm is a challenge and can be costly and harmful to the environment.

Wherever you are in your journey to reduce your church's carbon emissions, Ecclesiastical would like to help. For example, they would like to spread the word about some interesting innovations that they've come across recently.

Warming chandeliers

St Matthew's has been trialling innovative radiant heating chandeliers in their church in Bristol. These chandeliers use a very gentle wavelength of heat, like that of the winter sun, and they warm just the space needed, not the whole church. They have proved much cheaper to run than a central heating system and can help to lower your carbon footprint.



Through the Movement for Good awards, Ecclesiastical awarded a £35,000 grant to St Matthew's in 2023, which will allow them to make the trial installation permanent. If you would like to consider applying for a similar grant, further information can be found on page 3. Also, if you wish to install this type of heating, please let the Ecclesiastical Underwriters

know, so that they can advise on any potential insurance implications and ensure the system itself is covered.

Heated cushions

Another innovation, helping church communities take steps to reduce their carbon emissions by warming people not spaces, is a heated seat cushion! These are powered by lithium-ion batteries which are widely used as a power source in portable electrical products. However,



if you do choose this option, it is important to select seat cushions and fabrics that have an appropriate fire performance and to follow the guidance on charging the cushions. Cushions should comply with British Standards and have the CE mark. If you think that this is an option for you, you will find guidance about the cushions here:

🌐 www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/church-heated-cushions

Ecclesiastical has also developed a new Made Simple guide, which can support you on your journey to make your church buildings more environmentally friendly. It includes information about other alternative heating systems like heat pumps, information about LED lighting and much more.

🌐 www.ecclesiastical.com/madesimple

If you have any tips that have helped your church in its environmental journey, why not drop Ecclesiastical an email and they can share your ideas in their monthly digital newsletter.

✉ weboffice@ecclesiastical.com



Insurance made simple!

As church insurance experts, Ecclesiastical is well placed to help you navigate many of the complicated insurance responsibilities of your church. They have created a series of 'Made Simple' guides which highlight potential risks and insurance implications of the day-to-day running of churches.



The guides also offer help with activities and projects that PCCs often become involved in, which include:

- Climate change and your church
- Administering insurance
- Building works
- Church events
- Church property
- Church valuation
- Community outreach
- Digital technology
- Legal expenses
- People on church premises
- Unoccupied buildings

You can find lots more information at:

🌐 www.ecclesiastical.com/madesimple



Funeral planning

As you know, funerals can be costly, but Ecclesiastical can help you make provisions to reduce the financial worry for your family when the time comes and ensure your wishes are provided for.¹

¹ Terms and conditions apply – see website for details.

☎ 0800 055 6503
✉ info@epsfunerals.com
🌐 www.funeralplans.co.uk

Car insurance

Ecclesiastical's Clergy Motor Insurance has been tailored specifically for the clergy and includes benefits such as business use, unlimited windscreen cover and up to £500 cover for church goods in the car.¹ To find out more about the benefits of this policy, get in touch with Ecclesiastical.

☎ 0345 450 9396
🌐 www.ecclesiastical.com/church/car-insurance
¹ Subject to terms and conditions



Month by month support



So you can better look after your church and parishioners, Ecclesiastical has again produced their easy-to-view calendar to help you plan maintenance activities throughout the year.

🌐 www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-calendar

Insure your home with Ecclesiastical and they will donate £130 to a church of your choice

Trust130 is just one of the ways in which Ecclesiastical gives back to the community; for every new direct home insurance policy taken out, Ecclesiastical offers to donate £130 to an Anglican church or cathedral of the policyholder's choice.¹

Since 2017, Ecclesiastical has donated over £500,000 to more than 2,500 churches in the UK.

A £130 donation really helped **St Peter's Church in Parwich**. Church Treasurer **Stuart Chambers** told Ecclesiastical:

“ If you're short of numbers, it's a big job keeping everything ship-shape. I have a ride-on mower, but you can't get to the actual graves on that so inevitably they can look a bit unkempt, which is a real shame. ”

With the £130 donation, St Peter's was able to keep its graveyard looking neat and tidy by paying for a man with a strimmer.

Award-winning home insurance

As well as supporting your church, when you take out a home insurance policy with Ecclesiastical you are joining one of the most trusted home insurance providers with the happiest customers.²



Ecclesiastical continued to top the Fairer Finance league table in Spring 2024 for home insurance for a record 19th consecutive time, retaining the gold ribbon status. Their buildings and contents cover is also a Which? Best Buy and it was voted the best home insurance in the Times Money Mentor Awards in 2023.³



Get a home insurance quote

Ecclesiastical is a specialist insurer who understands the needs of those working in the church and for the church. Their policy helps to protect your home and takes into account the extra duties you carry out for the church.

☎ 0345 777 3322 and quote **CHOPS24**
🌐 www.ecclesiastical.com/homeinsurance

¹ Terms and conditions apply. Visit www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130-terms ² www.fairerfinance.com/ratings/customer-experience-ratings/home-insurance ³ www.ecclesiastical.com/homeinsurance

Your Church's Net Zero journey

In February 2020, General Synod voted for the whole of the Church of England to achieve Net Zero Carbon (NZC) by 2030, recognising that the global climate emergency is a crisis for God's creation and a fundamental injustice. In November 2022, the Diocese of Chester adopted the same target.

The diocese has now recruited a full time NZC Project Officer (NZC PO), Katy Purvis, who may be already known to many parishes, having spent the last seven years working within Chester Diocese's DAC department. Katy is keen to continue to serve our parishes, supporting Churchwardens in their work, albeit with a new more direct focus.

The NZC PO's primary task is to develop and drive implementation of the Diocesan NZC Action Plan. One aspect of this work is to find ways to reduce emissions in the areas over which the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) has direct control (Clergy Housing, Diocesan Offices, staff travel). The second is to provide support to sectors of the diocese over which the DBF has influence but not direct control (Churches & Parish Property, Schools, Cathedral, Emmanuel Theological College).

Church buildings have particular challenges when it comes to implementing NZC 2030. They are often listed, large and or draughty. There may be limits as to what can realistically be achieved in terms of improving their thermal properties by insulation as we might in our homes. There are significant practical and financial constraints which can make keeping people warm inside our buildings quite difficult, even before we begin to think about decarbonisation. Technology is developing rapidly with prices expected to come down, but statutory requirements, finance and volatile energy markets remain challenging. We know the journey to net zero will be hard, but by working together, supporting each other, learning through experience, identifying good practice and sharing our success stories, we can safeguard and renew the creation that God entrusted us to care for.

To find out more and take the first steps on your church's net zero journey, visit www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/net-zero-carbon-church#webinars-advice-and-support or contact:

✉ katy.purvis@chester.anglican.org



Minor Repairs and Improvement Grants Fund

The Diocese of Chester has been successful in securing £123,750 from national Church towards the cost of minor repairs and improvement works to be spent over the next two years. There were 50 requests for funding, following 92 requested for the application form, split evenly across both Chester and Macclesfield Archdeaconries. The funding has been oversubscribed by a factor of two. It will be allocated based on the social deprivation of the parish and the Parish Share percentage. The applications were being considered as we went to press.

Sheena Wilson

Buildings for Mission Adviser

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07729 072228

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Managing energy costs

The rise in energy costs is of great concern to many and you may be looking into lower-cost ways to heat and light your church. By planning ahead and taking sensible precautions, it is possible to reduce energy costs and minimise risks to your property and its occupants, avoiding the enormous inconvenience and financial impact of property damage.



Central heating

If you're planning on reducing your heating output to just a few areas of the building, it's worth considering reduced heating can cause damp and mould to form in unused areas.

Many radiators are fitted with thermostatic valves that control the heat output giving better energy efficiency. We recommend turning the valve down to a lower setting in unused areas to help keep the area damp free rather than turning heating off. This will also significantly reduce the risk of water pipes bursting. Water leaks can cause major property damage and enormous inconvenience. Radiators in occupied areas can be set at higher temperatures, as desired for comfort.

Important items, such as paintings and rugs may be susceptible to damage in colder conditions. These items should be relocated to warmer parts of the property or suitably protected by appropriate coverings where there is a risk of damage.

Portable heaters

The use of portable heaters may be considered as an alternative. If you are considering using portable heaters, we recommend the following checks before usage:

- Before purchase, check the heater is not included on published recall lists. Defective heaters are a known common cause of fires and even death.
- Use of portable gas, paraffin and other flammable liquid heaters should be avoided. They significantly increase the risk of fire.
- Ensure heaters are maintained as recommended by the manufacturer and kept in good working order. Only a competent person should undertake servicing or repairs.
- Heaters must be kept away from combustible items including timber furniture and altar frontals.
- Before moving any heater, ensure it is turned off and has cooled down.
- Do not leave portable heaters operating unsupervised.

Candles

Candles are, of course, synonymous with churches but are not recommended as an alternative form of lighting. Battery-powered torches or candles that are pre-charged should be considered as an alternative. If candles are used, they should be kept in holders designed for purpose and sited well away from furnishings, especially curtains. They must be extinguished before leaving a room.



By planning ahead and taking sensible precautions, it is possible to reduce energy costs and minimise risks to your property and its occupants, avoiding the enormous inconvenience and financial impact of property damage. Find out more at:

 www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/energy-savings-guidance

For more information

Call: 0345 777 3322 **Email:** churches@ecclesiastical.com

Facebook: Ecclesiastical  [@churchmatters](https://twitter.com/churchmatters)

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