

 Diocese of Sheffield

archdeacons' visitation news

Dear Churchwardens

It is my privilege to welcome you to this year's Archdeacons' Visitation News. I am delighted to have this opportunity to write to you on behalf of Malcolm and I as your archdeacons. As I write this piece in January, I pray that 2023 may bring renewed hope and trust in God, assurance of his love, peace, strength and guidance for a joyful year. *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."* (Romans 15 : 13)

After the Covid restrictions ended, we hoped for better days ahead, but sadly the cost of living crisis hit us. So, as I write to you during the coldest winter spell, I am mindful that many of our church members and PCCs may be worried about their energy bills. I pray that by the time you read this, by the grace of God and with good stewardship, we will have overcome many of these challenges. Despite the Pandemic and rising costs, I am greatly encouraged by how, as a diocese, we have continued to move forward to realise our vision and strategy. As followers of Jesus, we are able to face uncertainty and embrace challenges, confident in the faithfulness of God and the transforming work of the Holy Spirit because our hope is in the living God.

There is much progress to rejoice and be thankful for; the increasing number of functional Mission Areas, several new appointments to Oversight Minister roles, the growing number of Focal Ministry teams and the positive engagement in the 2025 prayer community and the Lights for Christ initiative all give me hope for a renewed church of God. We are mindful of the vital role you play in the life of your local church and help us realise our vision of a generous diocese that is Renewed, Released and Rejuvenated. Your sacrificial service is key in caring for the church buildings, supporting clergy and facilitating worship and mission. Your love and care are exemplary; thank

you for being so willing to serve as churchwardens in such tough times. Archdeacon Malcolm and I look forward to your continued partnership and collaboration to support our shared purpose of serving God and his church within our diocese.

We would like to convey our heartfelt thanks for your special ministry and look forward to seeing many of you at the new churchwardens training in June or at the churchwardens' conference in November. These two events are specially for you and provide helpful information and fellowship, so please make an effort to join us.

And now I pray, in the words of St Paul (Ephesians 3:19-21), you may *"... know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine"* empower you to serve God and his church through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers, blessings and best wishes

Ven Javaid Iqbal

Archdeacon of Doncaster



Javaid Iqbal
Archdeacon of
Doncaster



Malcolm Chamberlain
Archdeacon of Sheffield
and Rotherham

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Focal Ministry



Focal Minister



Penistone Focal Ministers

Essentially, for us Focal Ministry was about enabling a wider share in ministry. In the beginning, it was just Readers recognising their already licenced roles, but then eventually, as our journey coincided with the diocesan vision, we realised the possibility of an even wider team – those who were not already in licensed or commissioned roles. Within our team, Focal Ministry expresses itself as a group of women and men with a particular focus in ministry – enabling people to utilise their gifts and/or interests in certain areas within the church’s mission.

We have seven Focal Ministers within our team – each with distinctive contributions to offer, as follows:

- Susan is a lay Reader but is also an ambassador for prayer across the team. She also shares responsibility in the Mother’s Union’s leadership and is the Deanery leader.
- The focus of Jane’s ministry is her concern for people’s spiritual as well as mental wellbeing. She also helps us practically (as well as prayerfully) prepare for the Eucharist in Penistone.
- Claire is very much the “go-to person” at St James’ Midhopestones and also helps to lead worship there.
- Louise’s focus in ministry has been our administrative support – keeping our social media platforms up to date, and operating across the team but she is now ordinand and will soon be moving on.
- Steve is our Coordinating Focal Minister – keeping watch over the team in conjunction with the Oversight Minister, meeting with each minister individually, and calling the team together in a supportive group. Steve also serves as a Reader based in

Licensing November 2022



Penistone but has a special focus in ministry at St Anne’s, Carlecotes, a rural church very much in the midst of a farming community.

- Maureen is a Church Warden at St John’s Penistone and her focus in ministry is mission and evangelism within the parish.
- Phyllis is a Reader and has a particular pastoral and preaching focus at St Aidan’s.
- Victoria’s focus in ministry is children and families. She is involved in leading “Worship in the wild” and Messy Church – based in Penistone and has recently completed the Aurora Course.

Although our focal ministry team is fairly dispersed in their individual focussed ministries, they do join together in meetings for prayer and sharing ideas, but also socially, to offer mutual support for each other. Some of their ministries inevitably overlap and are similar, whilst others are different.

We do not envisage these roles to remain unchanged as, with God’s Holy Spirit, mission and ministry will never be static. Focal Ministers now share in ministry alongside clergy, offering their varied gifts in leadership within the Church of God as together we seek to fulfil our diocesan vision and be Renewed, Released and Rejuvenated.

Revd David Hopkin

Area Dean of Tankersley Deanery

Refresh for the Journey

Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. (Psalm 37:4-5)

2023 marks the mid-point of the five-year transformation funding we received to support our strategy to be a Renewed, Released and Rejuvenated Diocese. It is also the year in which we begin to prepare for our bid for the new triennium finding, the Strategic Mission & Ministry Investment Programme (SMMIP). As such, we have an excellent opportunity to reflect on our journey so far, on all that has been good as well as some of the struggles, and to seek God’s wisdom as we look forward to the rest of this decade.

Unless the Holy Spirit directs otherwise, nobody is expecting a radical change of direction, but it’s never a bad thing to prayerfully review and refresh our strategy, and to consider what resources we need to flourish in mission and land our vision of growing a sustainable network of Christ-like, lively and diverse Christian communities in every place which are effective in making disciples and in seeking to transform our society and God’s world.

Over the course of the year, you and your churches will have the opportunity to feed into the process that will contribute to this strategy refresh and eventual bid to the SMMIP – please do get involved! Whilst we can always put additional funding to good use, we will take this year to seek God and make sure that our bid is shaped to best fuel the strategy and vision of the diocese.

Ven Malcolm Chamberlain

Archdeacon of Sheffield & Rotherham

Resourcing Churches and New Congregations

The blessing of additional resources from the national church is helping the Diocese move closer to its vision: 'to grow a sustainable network of Christ-like, lively and diverse Christian communities in every place which are effective in making disciples and in seeking to transform our society and God's world.'

Resourcing Churches

A Resourcing Church is one that has agreed to support planting and grafting in the Diocese. We have a target of twelve Resourcing Churches by 2025. We currently have nine, two of which are supported by the Strategic Development Fund from the national church.

In the past year, Rotherham and Goole have been establishing new patterns of mission activities. Rotherham's Social Supermarket continues to empower people facing financial difficulties and a new Saturday afternoon congregation has grown out of this social action work. The music in schools work has really taken off since pandemic restrictions have been lifted and we now have nineteen wonderful young choristers as part of the Minster choir. The minster is also hosting school singing concerts. Both churches also now take a more prominent civic role in their towns. Kids' Church in Goole is growing and the team have now run a youth Alpha course.



Centenary Project

To date there have been 5,074 children and young people engaged through our Centenary Project since 2015. From July to September 2022, 914 under 18s engaged through 84 active groups. Many of these meet mid-week and go on to be mid-week new congregations – maybe a café church or messy church style congregation. These mid-week times often appeal to families, as they are more accessible than the traditional Sunday morning worship times.

The Strategic Development Fund's support for the Centenary Project ends in 2023, however, the Diocese will continue to resource the central team and will be exploring future options to sustain and expand this important area of ministry.

New Congregations

New Congregations are a great way of reaching people in our communities. They offer a variety of ways that people can connect with the Christian faith. In 2022 we have seen four new congregations begin bringing the total to fifteen. We also now have ten Church-in-School Congregations. If you think God might be calling you to start something new or you'd like to explore the idea of a New Congregation please contact John Marsh. John.Marsh@sheffield.anglican.org

Revd John Marsh Mission Development Adviser
Alex Shilkoff Strategic Programme Director

Creative use of the resources in tough times



A diligent Treasurer is of great value, but despite the fullest internet search and many telephone calls, we faced a rise of 800% on our gas and electricity bills. The parish of Warmsworth is rich in resources with a landmark place of worship, the White Church, with a large car park just off the A1 and a good

community hall. But funding the fuel bills of both was beyond us, so, with the Bishop's permission, we made the move to the hall alone as it will cost less than 50% of the church building to heat.

The move has been embraced by the congregation with good heart and with an eye and ear for the positives; we are closer together and the singing is better; we can serve refreshments in the same space with no need to move from one building to another. The hall is also the space for our many other groups so we share the heat and cost with Knit and Natter; the craft group; the domestic violence support group; the young dancers; Slimming World; Pilates and Yoga; the bereavement support group; Messy Church and the Tuneless Choir.

There is a common desire to be sheltered and warm; we are all reviewing our rising outgoings and static incomes. Goodness, we have a lot to share and in that shared space, perhaps we can share good news too as paths cross; conversations grow, names are exchanged and out of conversations, who knows what blessings might emerge.

Revd Ian Smith
Area Dean of West Doncaster Deanery

Receiving a graft

Since 2016 All Saints church had been losing people from the congregation, notably families with young children and young adults so the average age of the congregation rose significantly. This meant there were not enough people to continue many community and other activities. Various conversations took place over a period of time resulting in an offer of help from the ministry team at Christ Church Endcliffe.

Fast forward several months and a graft was proposed. A graft, it should be understood is NOT a takeover. It is a means by which an existing body has something added to it so that together they grow and are stronger and flourish. Graft also means hard work!

In preparation, we had a great deal of prayer and teaching in both congregations and opportunities to meet the graft team. Hopes and dreams were shared misconceptions and fears surrounding our individual styles of churchmanship were discussed and addressed. Then in June 2021 Revd Ben Tanner became the vicar of All Saints Totley.

Initially 12 adults and 12 children came as part of the graft team. They didn't come to show All Saints how to do church "better", nor was it for All Saints to show Christ Church how to "do things our way". It was a new All Saints Totley, moving forward together, learning to love each other and share God's love with our community.

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Since June, more people have joined our congregation. Our numbers have doubled and All Saints has started to feel like the lively and welcoming fellowship that it had been and longed to become again.

We have been truly blessed by the graft. We need to thank the congregations of both churches for their willingness to step out in faith and support the graft. Of course, our most grateful thanks are to God who has poured out His grace to us all. We are humbled and amazed at what blessings we have received. However, we shouldn't really be surprised at all as the Bible tells us quite clearly

God is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of, infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts or hopes. Ephesians 3:20.

Liz Hayden

All Saints Totley

Resourcing Mission and Ministry in the Diocese of Sheffield



Before taking up my new role in the diocese as Director of Mission and Ministry (DMM) I was vicar of St Chad Woodseats for twelve years and, for the last three of those years, priest-in-charge of St James Norton – both churches in the South of Sheffield. During those years I worked with excellent churchwardens in both churches and saw first hand the challenges and struggles (as well as the joys!) that wardening brings.

One memory above all has seared itself onto my brain. It was Christmas Day 2016. I walked into a freezing cold church to see my warden in floods of tears holding her finger over a leak in the central heating. As soon as she moved her finger, a fountain of discoloured liquid sprayed over the walls. It was third time the heating had broken that winter, and as it turned out, the last – shortly afterwards we left the church building and began worshipping in a local school.

Wardening is perhaps not the most glamorous of church ministries – especially not when boilers are involved – but it is one of the most important. When it comes to mission and ministry they are just as much on the front line as clergy, readers, evangelists or any of the more up front roles.

My role as DMM is therefore as relevant to churchwardens as to anyone else. You may well be aware that up to now we have had two teams in Church House, Rotherham, working with diocesan mission and ministry. The Parish Support Team (PST) under Mark Cockayne helped churches with, among other things, mission action planning, starting new congregations and developing a discipleship culture. St Peter's College under Christine Gore focused on training and equipping lay ministry through School of Ministry, focal minister training and digital learning. With Christine and Mark both retiring last summer the way was open to bring these two teams together and to streamline the way that we deliver mission and ministry in the diocese.

We are calling this new team Resourcing Mission and Ministry (RMM) with an emphasis on resourcing. Every church has its own unique call to mission and ministry depending on the makeup of the worshipping community and the context in which it is set. In the Spring you will receive details of Mission Action Plan 2023 which will help you discern and nurture this call – perhaps starting new initiatives, perhaps building on what you are already doing. RMM will be there to help you in the MAP process and, more importantly, to resource you in the next steps that you identify.

Those next steps may involve working with individuals or with whole congregations. Thanks to generous funding from the national church we have been able to employ Hannah Sandoval promoting Lights for Christ, John Marsh encouraging new congregations and Elliot Hylliger working with digital mission. Hannah, John and Elliot are very happy to meet with PCCs and leadership teams to see how they can help churches move on in these areas.

Perhaps you are beginning to identify individuals in your congregation who may be sensing a call to some form of ministry but don't yet know what that might be. RMM, working with the vocations team, can help people listen to God's call and take those first steps, which may be enrolling on our Foundations course, contacting Sally Myers about focal ministry, or perhaps exploring a Personal Rule of Life so that they can hear God more clearly.

Our vision is that every congregation, and every worshipper within each congregation, comes to know God's calling more clearly in their life together. RMM are here to provide guidance, encouragement and resources as we travel that exciting road together.

Revd Toby Hole

Director of Mission & Ministry

For more information

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