

archdeacons' visitation news

Holding together past, present and future

Archdeacon of York Sam Rushton wants to open the doors wider

*In the mind's eye, in the memory-store, for now
The church sets sail but stays where it was built,
Its anchor hooked into the parish-heart...
In the flint nave, in the window-shafts, for now
The glassy saints grow limber with the sun
That ripples through their robes and walk again...*

Andrew Motion's poem 'For now' evokes the timelessness of our parish churches, particularly those which have been around for a while in their communities, and also their precariousness. 'Sets sail but stays where it was built' and 'the glassy saints ...walk again' point to the way in which our church buildings – and indeed our church communities – move and change constantly and yet somehow also remain the same. No other building in our national heritage perhaps has this same quality – to hold the past, the present and the future together on behalf of the community it serves. For now.

In some ways we act as stewards for the soul of England, incarnate in bricks and stone as well as in faith, story and ritual. So it is sad to see churches close, especially for lack of money or community engagement. How can we turn this around?

The Church Buildings Council (a body of the national Church of England) is working hard with dioceses and parishes to keep buildings open for worship and enjoyed by all – if you haven't seen their website¹ it is worth a look. They offer advice to PCCs and are lobbying the Government for support in keeping our national heritage alive. Through them, York Diocese has been granted enough to employ a Church Buildings Support Officer (Viv Cooling started work in early February) to provide fundraising advice and guidance, and also to work with churches on their community engagement plans. We also now have a Minor Repairs and Improvement Grants scheme. All of this is funded by national Church Commissioner money, there to support local parish churches with their local mission.

A church building in ruins is no way to honour the past or serve the present. We long to see every church building as a beacon of light, life and hope in our communities, but we can't do this alone. Somehow, we need to find ways of opening the door wider, sharing the stewardship of our buildings with the wider community where we can, and finding new and wonderful ways of living Christ's story through our buildings as well as our people.

 ¹www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/church-buildings-council



The Ven Dr Amanda Bloor
Archdeacon of Cleveland



The Ven Andy Broom
Archdeacon of the East Riding



The Ven Sam Rushton
Archdeacon of York



Revitalise



Ven John Day
Growing Healthy Churches Adviser

Revitalise is one strand of the Growing Healthy Churches element of our developing Living Christ’s Story strategy to promote renewed growth across the Diocese of York.

Growing Healthy Churches Adviser the Ven John Day explains:

In October 2022, the Bishops and Archdeacons committed to inviting a selection of parishes to join Revitalise – a Diocesan Living Christ’s Story initiative.

Revitalise sits alongside, for

example, Mustard Seed, Multiply, Deepening Discipleship, Rhythm of Life and Generous Giving. We accompany parishes for two years on a journey to grow missionally and financially. Revitalise invites everyone in the local church community to play a part.

By May 2024, forty parishes will be on a Revitalise journey in five cohorts. There are two work streams to Revitalise:

1. The parish clergy and four lay leaders join other parishes four times a year, at Wydale, as a Learning Community focusing on growth. There is no course, as such. The parishes decide what we explore. To date we have shared our parish story, considered how to start a new congregation, focusing on growing younger, and asked ‘How might we pray for mission?’ Coming up is a day on making disciples at parish social action projects.
2. Between the Learning Community days, a Growing Healthy Churches Team member visits each parish to explore growth in its particular context, church tradition and location (rural, urban, market town etc.).

The Team is currently John Day with the Revd John Lee (who also leads the Multiply project, helping build new worshipping communities amongst those in their 20s, 30s and 40s).



Mission Action Planning involves everyone



Coffee Mornings and Café Church are parts of the big picture

Revitalise in action

The Revd Tina Burgess is Vicar of St Martin’s Church, Middlesbrough:

Revitalise has been a wonderful experience for us. We had been working on producing a Mission Action Plan for some time, seeking to self-evaluate where we were as a church; looking at our own discipleship, challenges and opportunities for growth and where our opportunities were for building a fringe of contacts so that we could build new relationships in the community, post-pandemic.

Revitalise has helped us to fine-tune that process so that we now have a Mission Action Plan which will help us be purposeful in meeting our aim of growing deeper in our own relationship with God and growing in number as we seek to reach out with the good news of God in our lives, to those around us. We have enjoyed doing Café Church, Creative Family Worship, Coffee Mornings, the Alpha Course and Experience Christmas with the local school.

One of the most enjoyable things about Revitalise is being part of a learning community of other churches. Though we are from very different contexts, both urban and rural, we discovered that we all face the same challenges. We have enjoyed the experience of being able to reflect together and hear one another’s stories and plans and are excited as we grow together in God’s mission and ministry across the diocese.

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

Herschel Infrared



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

Contactless

Adjective: contactless; adjective: contact-less
Not involving physical contact or direct interaction



The Diocese of York's Generous Giving team oversaw the one-off distribution of 70 contactless, cash-free giving units to churches in the diocese in 2023 as part of the Church of England's 'Digital Rollout' campaign.

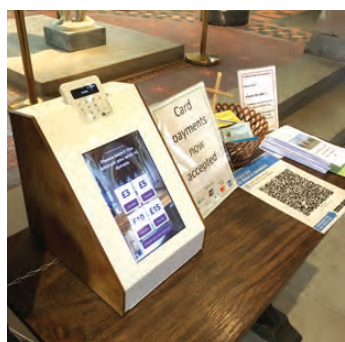
York Diocesan Generous Giving Adviser **Phil McBride** reflects:

So, you've got your contactless unit and have begun to take some donations through it. Congratulations!

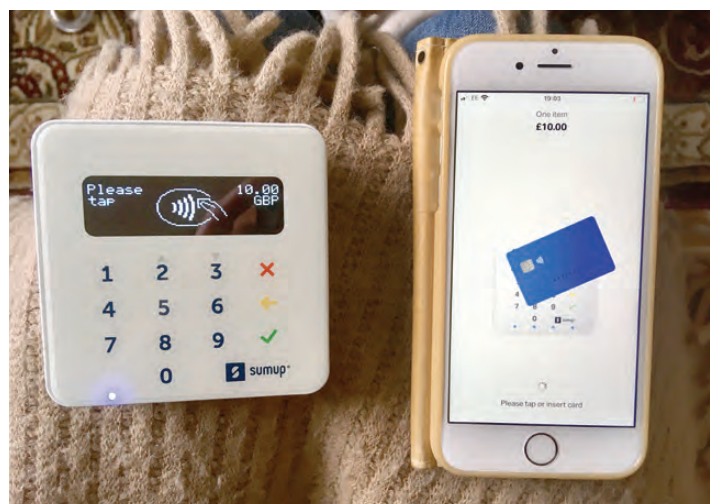
If you have been part of the rollout in 2023, or have been using your device for some time, you might be thinking about what the next step is.

How do we promote our machine? How can we make sure we are getting the best of it? How can we raise the average gift amount? These are all questions I have had asked of me in the past few months.

There are probably a lot of people, however, who are not as far along the road as this – you might be thinking about getting a contactless unit, or even "What on earth is one of those?!"



To answer that final question first – as we find fewer and fewer people carrying cash, we need to respond to this and give those who use cards or phones for payments an easy way to donate. The solution comes in a contactless unit – a machine that will take a card donation in the same way you might pay for goods at a shop.



They come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and prices. The cheapest is £70 and the most expensive comes in at over £800! If you are interested in finding out more, please do drop me a line.

But now, for the many churches who have already got a unit and are wondering how they can capitalise on it:

- **Have you considered location?**

Is your device sitting proudly in a position where a giver can not only see it but can also access it? Try to avoid having something (or someone) standing in front of it or putting it in a place where people can't reach it to make their gift.

- **How are you promoting it?**

Having it is one thing, but creating materials to draw attention to it and explaining how to make a donation can be helpful – especially if your church is open but not staffed during the day. Contact me if I can help.

- **Are you telling people why they might give?**

It's all very well having a lovely shiny unit but if you are not telling people the story of why they should gift to your church, then you probably are not making the most of it. Try to avoid asking for roof funds or organ repairs, but instead tell them how you would like to help the mission of the church and the local community by saying what your plans and vision are.

- **Have you trialled different amounts in your campaigns?**

If you have the time to look at your gifts so far, are people donating the lowest amount offered or not? It might be worth looking at these figures – if you are offering e.g. £3, £5, £10 and £20, what are most donation amounts? If the majority are donating £5, why have the £3 option? After all, your device does have the 'choose other amount' option.

I am starting to create materials around this last point as it is a contentious issue so I would love to hear your thoughts on this – please do get in touch if you'd like to know more.

Phil is glad to work with any church that needs to develop further the way it uses a contactless unit: contact him via:

✉ generous.giving@yorkdiocese.org
 🌐 www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/generosity

Really part of the community

The restoration of St Mary's Church and Community Centre, Sandsend

Helen Lloyd of St Mary's, Sandsend (near Whitby), tells a tale of local revival:

SOS – save our St Mary's – this was the banner that was put outside church seven years ago. A quinquennial report advised that £25,000 emergency repairs were needed and the church was threatened with closure.

Two years after that, after a successful fundraising drive in a very small village that raised over £250,000, we were able to install a disabled loo, kitchen, new heating and lighting, take the roof off and insulate it and decorate and redo the floor.

The restoration fundraising committee then became St Mary's community committee to organise community events and use the building to its full potential.

Selling some of the pews and purchasing comfortable wooden stackable chairs made a much more usable, adaptable space.



St Mary's restoration began outside. The interior can suit a variety of needs

Old hymn books have been replaced with a screen and PowerPoint for all services. People look up to the screen and the acoustics are fantastic. We took the opportunity to make the services slightly more modern. We now regularly have the schoolchildren in for their own interactive service.

The community committee arranges various events – dinners, drinks, a weekly yoga session, art exhibitions, art workshops etc and a weekly Coffee & Quack (coffee morning). Coffee & Quack has now been going for three years and this in particular has brought many more people into the church who now come to the occasional service. It has brought the community together with non-churchgoers helping.

Three years ago, residents in Sandsend made over 2,000 paper angels to hang from the ceiling; this has been absolutely amazing, bringing so many people into the church. We continue to make angels and ask for a donation for them and since 2022 over £5,500 has been raised for the local food bank.

St Mary's is open 24 hours a day and has a steady stream of visitors and donations. From being a cold, locked-up church to a warm, welcoming building, it has really become part of the community.

Note: alterations to church buildings and furnishings may require a Faculty; if in doubt, contact your Archdeacon.



For more information

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

Facebook: Ecclesiastical **X:** @churchmatters

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