



SUMMER 2023

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The magazine for the Diocese of Newcastle

# Bishop Helen-Ann's Service of Inauguration

Full story plus  
more pictures:  
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## About this magazine

**Feedback:** [communications@newcastle.anglican.org](mailto:communications@newcastle.anglican.org) or 0191 270 4100 and ask to be put through to the Communications Team.

**Sustainability:** We use a Carbon Balanced printer to produce this publication. The printer works with global

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# A message from Bishop Helen-Ann



The Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley

**F**ollowing my service of installation as Bishop of Newcastle in April, our Diocesan Director of Education (DDE) mentioned that he'd caught up with my former church primary school headteacher, who he knew from various education meetings over the years.

Given Mr Thorndyke had taught me (and then went on to become headteacher of my old school after I left) about 40 years ago, this was a real meeting across the generations.

Paul, our DDE, actually used Mr Thorndyke's first name in conversation with me, but even now, to me, Mr Thorndyke is definitely still 'Mr'. Perhaps you have experienced this too: a resistance to the realisation that your teachers have first names and a real life?!

It was very special (all that said) that both Mr Thorndyke from my primary school-days, and Sr Francis who taught me RE at secondary

school were both in Newcastle Cathedral on April 22nd. I think it's fair to say that without either of them, I probably wouldn't now be your Bishop.

That's not an exaggeration, rather it is an assertion of the vital importance of the role of education in shaping who we are, and the role a questioning and curious faith plays in this. It's why our schools, and the community schools so many of our parishes, clergy, and chaplains are connected with are and will be a priority to me in my new role.

Beyond these too, are places of further and higher education, along with many ways that education in its broadest forms shapes our lives and our communities. An enquiring mind in many ways is the basis of faith development and an encounter with God. Jesus taught his disciples to notice things in their daily lives, and to use the raw stuff of life to illustrate God's love, mercy and justice.

The parables are the building blocks of teaching, and invite us to relate what we see and encounter in our own lives to the bigger story of God's dealings with the world over the generations. Once, I remember being handed a mustard seed when I arrived at a church service (illustrative of the day's Gospel reading). Have you ever tried holding onto a single mustard seed? It's quite tricky!

It served as a reminder of valuing the smallness of things, not just objects but people and places too. A BBC journalist recently posted a short online video of birdsong at dawn in the centre of London. A tiny almost inconsequential thing, but a thing of value and beauty nonetheless, a defiant stand against the fear and anxiety that grips so many people and places in our world. If I do one thing this day, it will be to seek out and celebrate the small; will you join me in this task please? Let me know what you find.

**The Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley**

# Inauguration of Ministry

## Of the Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley as the 13th Bishop of Newcastle



Around a thousand people gathered at Newcastle Cathedral to celebrate the inauguration of the Right Reverend Dr Helen-Ann Hartley as the 13th Bishop of Newcastle.

Among those attending the inauguration service were clergy from across Newcastle Diocese, Church of England bishops, leaders from other faiths, and civic and political leaders from across the North East.

Former Olympic athlete and founder of the Great North Run Sir Brendan Foster gave a scripture reading, while pupils from Archbishop Runcie Church of England First School led Bishop Helen-Ann through the Cathedral accompanied by Northumbria Pipers, Robson's Choice.

Here's a selection of images from that memorable day – and also some pictures of Bishop Helen-Ann's visits to different places across the Diocese ahead of her inauguration.



Town Moor Park Run



Bishop Helen-Ann on board a new Metro



Meeting a friendly Dalek at Allendale, near Hexham



Visit to Bellingham Deanery

Visiting Corbridge Deanery

Riding the Bounds at Berwick

# Deanery Planning

## Shaping the future

**G**od has blessed us with a wealth of ministry resources – now an exciting initiative is underway to explore how we best deploy them.

All 12 deaneries within Newcastle Diocese are involved with the scheme, which was launched in October last year.

In a new video, Bishop Mark talks about the background to the project and how it will take shape this summer and beyond.

He said: "All of the time, we are seeking to discern how God is leading us as His people. That's a key concern for us in Newcastle Diocese as we inhabit this world that we live in, as we meet the challenges that we face. How is the ministry and mission of God's church and our Diocese to be shaped and formed for the future?"

Bishop Mark added: "By the autumn, the Diocese will have a clearer vision of how we are going to meet the challenges of the future, where our clergy are deployed, where we can call upon the great resources that we already



**Bishop of Berwick, Rt Revd Mark Wroe**

have in terms of the people and the gifts that God has given to us."

People can get involved by attending their deanery synods, by asking Area Deans and Lay Chairs about how the planning is going within their area. Bishop Mark has called

upon us all to pray for the process.

Revd Louise Taylor-Kenyon, Area Dean for Bamburgh & Glendale, also appears in a video in which she said the process had helped to establish a vision and identify key values.

Louise said: "We really want to be places which are both growing inside in terms of who worships with us, but also to be growing in the way that we engage with our wider communities."

**Find the videos at [newcastle.anglican.org/deanery-mission-planning](https://newcastle.anglican.org/deanery-mission-planning).**

*"All of the time, we are seeking to discern how God is leading us as His people. That's a key concern for us in Newcastle Diocese"*

*- Bishop of Berwick, Rt Revd Mark Wroe*



**Revd Louise Taylor-Kenyon**

## God is prompting us to do things differently

By The Venerable Rachel Wood, Archdeacon of Northumberland; and The Venerable Catherine Sourbut Groves, Archdeacon of Lindisfarne.

**T**hings around us change all the time. Sometimes it's a major event like the cost of living crisis or how we respond to the climate emergency. Sometimes it's the smaller things that creep up on us over time and we don't realise the impact until it becomes a big scary thing, so much so that we may choose to ignore it and hope that everything just carries on as it is.

Often it can be much easier for us to focus on what we have lost or what we lack rather than thinking of what we have and what could be. We can all see things changing around us; and perhaps most starkly from a diocesan viewpoint, parish share has been



Archdeacon of Lindisfarne,  
The Ven Catherine Sourbut Groves



Archdeacon of Northumberland,  
The Ven Rachel Wood

reducing and continues to do so, whilst costs increase. If we are to have a sustainable future that is also focused on growing the church in all of our places, we need to see change; change in our deaneries, in our parishes, in each and every one of us. This is challenging.

On the one hand we need to be financially responsible and to live within our means. On the other hand, many of us want to see more investment to support our vision for flourishing mission in every place, consistently looking outwards into the communities we serve and joining in with God's mission. The good news is that the two actually go together as God has already given us what we need, but if we are to grow, if we are to see transformation, we must think and do differently, and we expect this will test most of us!

Last October, Deanery Development Groups (DDGs) from around the Diocese came together to hear about the launch of a new planning process, an opportunity for deaneries to develop their own plans for ministry and mission. This will include plans for where our ministers (paid/unpaid, lay/clergy) are to be deployed over the next three years to help lead us to financial sustainability. Our Diocesan synod has determined that we can financially sustain

*"Whilst we do our best to steward the resources that God has given us, the good news is that God has a plan for each and every one of us, our task is to learn to trust God"*

- Archdeacon of Northumberland,  
The Ven Rachel Wood

80 full time paid clergy, however with 92 full time posts at present, most of us will see some changes.

But, sustainability is much more than just balancing the books, it's about thinking through how we see mission flourishing in every place. This makes us reflect on what the vision is in each of our parishes and deaneries and what might our mission look like in the coming years, how can we better share resources across our church communities, how do we collaborate more, how do we better equip our leaders for the future, can we use our buildings in more innovative ways, how do we see all of our parishes flourishing and growing in faith?

DDGs across the Diocese will be completing their plans by the end of June and consulting through deanery synods and with parishes directly on proposed changes. These are changes that will challenge many of us and impact all of us, so please do take the opportunity to engage in the process through your deanery synod.

Whilst we do our best to steward the resources that God has given us, the good news is that God has a plan for each and every one of us, our task is to learn to trust God. As we journey together, we do this in a spirit of hopeful realism – aware of the challenges of resource and acknowledging that God is seeking to do a new thing and prompting us to do things differently in order that we might be a diocese that is open, sustainable, thriving and confident.

# Introducing two of our new ordinands

**M**airi Howell was happy teaching Religious Education along with other subjects in Christian primary schools. She enjoyed working with children and was comfortable in the belief that this was her calling to serve God.

And it was - for two decades it was a fulfilling vocation served with distinction. But a two-year stay in Australia in 2016 sowed the seeds for future ordination.

Today, the 47-year-old is preparing to become a deacon. Mairi has been posted to St Paul's, Whitley Bay, where her new chapter will begin in July.

"It's been quite a journey," said the mum-of-four who was born in Morpeth and grew up in a church family. "I am very much looking for-

ward to moving to Whitley Bay. It will be good to meet everyone at St Paul's, to find out where they are at the moment and see where my skills will fit in with their vision for the future of St Paul's."

Mairi's journey started as a churchgoer during childhood. She was a natural leader and took active roles during teen services and other church youth events. Before going off to university, Mairi took a year-out to be part of an initiative called Time for God.

Mairi taught part-time after having children, and expected to continue when they relocated to Australia for her husband's work. Unfortunately, the Australian authorities dictated that a minimum of four years training was needed to teach; as Mairi's degree was only three years, it was time to find other forms of employment. Always keen to be busy, she helped out with a

friend's catering business and also worked on the Australian census.

"I had always considered teaching as my calling," she said. "But in Australia I wasn't able to do that, so I had to ask who I was when I wasn't Mrs Howell the teacher."

Worshipping in an Anglican church where the family shared a lot in common with the recently arrived English priest and his young children, encouraged her to think about other vocations.

"That was probably the first time since I was a child that I had considered ordination," she reflected.

Mairi resumed her teaching career on arrival back in the UK and had 20 years' service under her belt by the time her new direction began to take shape. After many conversations with people who had been involved in her journey, including the three other ordinands from St Gabriel's, and with the now former Diocesan Director of Ordinands, Claire Robson, who retired last December, Mairi went on to study for three years at Lindisfarne College of Theology.

"It's great for training," said Mairi, who attended a recent trip to Jerusalem with Lindisfarne College in April. "The college has challenged my thinking more deeply, and sharing fellowship with people training for many different ministries has been hugely formational – the whole thing has been a highly valuable experience."

Prior to Jerusalem, a trip which she described as memorable, Mairi attended visits to the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland, and also to Poland, where she was encouraged to think theologically about Auschwitz.

A familiar face at St Gabriel's Heaton, which has been her local church for the past 20 years, Mairi added: "It's a privilege to be called to ordination. I will be moving to Whitley Bay with my family so it's something we are very much committed to. We are looking forward to meeting people and getting started with this new chapter."

**Mairi Howell**



**I**t has been quite a year for Nathanael Hayler. Just 12 months after he became a deacon and began his first post in rural Northumberland, the 24-year-old is preparing to be ordained into the priesthood.

## Nathanael Hayler

One of the country's youngest curates, Nathanael will remain at the nine Coastland Churches within the Alnwick deanery, where he is happily settled after falling in love with the North East, a region he initially discovered as a student at Durham University.

Being the child of a serving Anglican minister in South Wales, it's all too easy to assume that his journey to priesthood was an obvious one, but it could have been very different after moving with his family to Cambridge.

"I am Welsh but I consider Cambridge as home," said Nathanael. "That being said, I have really been taken by this region and I really do feel blessed to be living and serving in such a glorious setting on the Northumberland coast. I'm so pleased to feel such a draw to this wonderful place and believe that this is where God is calling me to minister, and eventually to call Northumberland home.

"It is an honour and a privilege to serve in the church. It is something I have journeyed towards for many years and I'm looking forward to taking the next step."

Nathanael said his father, the Revd Dr Peter Hayler, who served in many roles and is currently Rector in rural Kent, never once pushed him into a life in the church. Indeed, he was freely allowed to play football and later the sport of roller hockey during his teenage years, which involved taking part in fixtures on Sunday.

"Growing up I was always sporty," he explained. "My parents allowed me the freedom to say no to church, but if I had any questions they were pleased to answer them. As a teenager I realised that I did want to explore what church was about and the support of my family has been crucial on that journey."



Nathanael studied theology at Durham and quickly adapted to life in the North East, a region where he continues to enjoy discovering.

He explained: "We have smaller congregations than you see in towns and cities but we appreciate all we do have and we love fostering relationships and grasping opportunities within our communities.

"I enjoy working with people of all ages. Even in the short time I've been here, I hope I have broadened horizons and made people think about what we can achieve together. I would like everyone to see that the church is a living and active place which is hospitable and welcoming."

While he will continue to serve within the

same churches, Nathanael explained how things will change as he becomes a priest.

He explained: "Being a deacon is about developing relationships, listening and reflecting, with a focus on scripture – what it means to be a minister of God's Word.

"Becoming a priest will be about growing into being a minister of the Sacrament as well as the Word. Presiding at Holy Communion will be a huge privilege and a massive step on the journey of becoming more fully myself – called to be a priest in God's church.

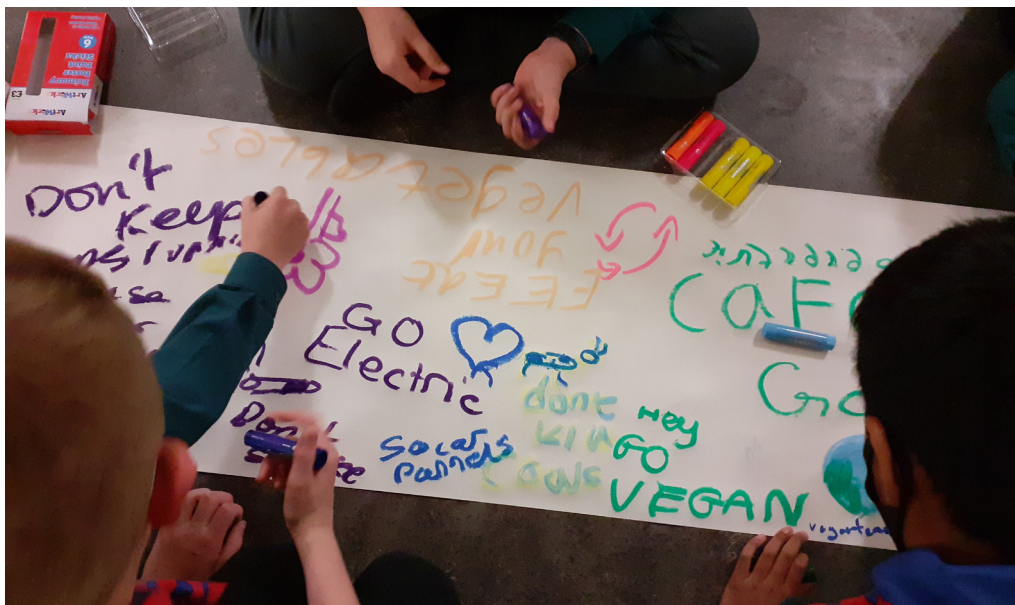
"My role is and will continue to be about equipping people to be disciples on a Monday morning, not just on Sundays – living out their faith confidently and authentically day to day."

# Climate emergency - A crisis for God's creation

The Revd Mark Nash-Williams, chair of the Diocesan Environment Working group and Bishop's Adviser on the Environment, updates us on the journey towards net carbon zero.

It's more than three years since General Synod voted for the whole of the Church of England to achieve net zero carbon by 2030, recognising that the global climate emergency is a crisis for God's creation.

**A** plan of action, the Routemap to Net Zero Carbon, was approved last summer. By 2030, the Church of England wants most of our buildings to be warm, bright and welcoming, powered by renewable energy and using low or zero carbon technologies for heat and light. The Routemap defines what is in-scope (what is reasonably within our control) and sets out a timetable for action. The Church Commissioners are committed to investing £190 million this decade into decarbonisation.



## What does net zero carbon mean?

It means eliminating, as far as possible, emissions of in-scope greenhouse gases (primarily CO<sub>2</sub>) – from the oil, gas and electricity we use in our buildings to the petrol and diesel we use for transport. It also means removing an equivalent

amount of carbon from the atmosphere for the in-scope emissions which we can't avoid, by use of accredited offsetting schemes. This may be a better option than replacing heating systems for small country churches which are used for a couple of hours a month, for example.

## Case study: St John's Church Killingworth

A climate-conscious North Tyneside church has overcome the challenges of listed building status to reach a significant milestone.

St John's Church at Killingworth has achieved the Eco Church Silver Award, after making huge strides since signing up with the A Rocha UK scheme three years ago.

The initiative works with churches to equip them to care for God's creation through their worship and teaching, buildings and land, community engagement and individual lifestyles. After scooping the bronze award relatively quickly in the process, St John's received news of its silver status in the spring.

"We are really very pleased," said Priest in Charge, Revd Sarah Moon. "We have a very active eco church group which is ably supported by our very engaging congregation. After initially achieving the bronze award, it has taken us longer to reach silver, but now we will be aiming for gold."

"Everybody involved has played their part and we are hugely grateful for that. It's nice to win awards but the real focus is on what they represent – doing our bit to care for our environment."

Like all churches taking part in the scheme, St John's has had to work to a set criteria which has been tailored to accommodate the listed building status, which dates back 150 years. This has meant that

some quick wins, such as double glazing, have not been possible.

But churchgoers have raised money to improve the heating system, which will be switched from gas to electric, while the installation of solar panels is an option to be considered.

Other building-related solutions can be more straightforward, such as replacing every regular lightbulb with an LED equivalent, and using the timer on the hall heating boiler, so the church is only heated when necessary.

The eco-group has been engaged in a lively campaign for climate justice. Activities have ranged from writing letters to MPs, to adopting policies on fair trade,

*"We have an active and growing network of Eco Champions. More than 30 churches have achieved an Eco Church award – we've smashed the Bronze Eco Diocese threshold, and are working towards Silver!"*

- The Revd Mark Nash-Williams

### Net zero carbon- what is happening in Newcastle Diocese?

We have just received a grant of £15,000 from the Church Commissioners to help us develop a detailed strategy, and will be applying for further funding to help us to implement it.

We have an active and growing network of Eco Champions. We already have nearly 80 churches registered with Eco Church, and more than 30 churches have achieved an Eco Church award – we've smashed the Bronze Eco Diocese threshold, and are working towards Silver!

The Diocesan office at Church House has also been awarded a Silver Eco Church Award and the Diocese is committed to fossil free investments.



### What can I do to help?

- Measuring our carbon footprint is a good start, so we know the scale of the challenge – the Church of England's Energy Footprint Tool is quick and simple to use.
- Simple measures such as draught-proofing, setting timers correctly, more efficient light bulbs.
- Our churchyards and grounds can help to contribute to biodiversity and environmental health if we manage them well.
- The Eco Church scheme and, for families

and individuals, the Creation Care awards ([creationcare.org.uk](http://creationcare.org.uk)) can be a real encouragement

- Links to all these resources and more can be found on our website – [www.newcastle.anglican.org/environment-getting-started/](http://www.newcastle.anglican.org/environment-getting-started/)
- For more support and ideas, or to share your successes, contact Mark via **environment@newcastle.anglican.org** or Tim Mayfield, Co-Chair of the Environment Working Group **tim.mayfield@btinternet.com**



St John's Church, Killingworth with their Echo Church Silver Award

recycling paper and reducing the amount of paper used.

"We've been thinking globally," said

Sarah, who has a passion for climate change and has played a supporting role to the eco church group. "We've put policies in place and embarked on several ini-

tiatives. We're always coming up with suggestions to make us greener. It is inherent on all of us to do all we can to make sure the impact on the world is lesser."

Eco tips for the congregation are included in church notice sheets at St John's, while people have been encouraged to recycle items such as empty foil pill packets.

A Christian Aid study course was used during Lent this year. During the same period, there was a collection towards joining a toilet twinning scheme, which helps to provide clean water, basic sanitation and hygiene education for people in countries affected by poverty.

- Follow St John's Church on Twitter @KillingworthSt

# Church Buildings Review Toolkit - build an open and sustainable future for your church

A step-by-step guide has been launched to help churches and their communities across Newcastle Diocese build a sustainable future for their buildings, rooted in their Mission Action Planning.

It is a legacy of the highly successful Rural Churches for Everyone (RCfE) project, which supported 35 church buildings in four rural benefices of Newcastle Diocese, with backing from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF).

The initiative drew to a close last winter after the funding reached the end of its four-year timeframe, but support for PCCs will expand across the Diocese in the form of the new RCfE Buildings Review Toolkit.

Dr Nicola Bell, who was the RCfE project evaluator from Newcastle University, said: "Rural churches face many challenges and it can be difficult for congregations to know which way to turn. RCfE got PCCs working together, and added in expertise from Community Action Northumberland, Durham University Archaeology Department, and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

"The funding from NLHF was fixed term, but we're hoping it will have a longer legacy. Many things do not need money, such as creating new community partnerships, churchwardens learning from each other's experiences, and PCCs working together to research new ideas and ambitions. Reaching out and getting some help beyond their own community has empowered people to think in different, creative ways and energised them."

The Church of England's Church Buildings Council wants all retained church buildings to be both 'open' and 'sustainable', and encourag-



**The Managing Your Churchyard for Wildlife and Biodiversity group in Thorneyburn's reflection area, discussing how to use churchyards more effectively.**

**The diocesan Rural Strategy Group invite you to their 'Rural Church and Pilgrimage' workshop:**

**Thursday 29 June 2023 | Shilbottle Village Hall | 10am – 4pm**

**More information / book your place at <https://bit.ly/3LZkeIF>**

es every diocese to review each of their church buildings every five years, and award them a traffic light rating to highlight where support is needed.

Yvonne Conchie, the RCfE project consultant, designed the toolkit to help PCCs, churchwardens and clergy – the people who know each church best – to develop a strong and coherent voice in this process. The toolkit allows PCCs to generate robust evidence, which will allow them to advocate clearly for the help they need to care for their valued buildings.

Their work will inform how their mission and ministry might shape the church buildings to better meet the needs of parishioners in the future, so they can persist at the heart of their communities.

The toolkit combines research and advice from the Church of England Environment Programme, the Co-op Wellbeing Index, the National Churches Trust, the Church Urban Fund, Historic England and others, into a free, simple, easy-to-use checklist.

It asks groups of churches to work together to assess how well their buildings currently meet the eight national 'open' and 'sustainable' criteria and then to consider what actions they would likely take within the next five years to improve their collective scores. This forms the basis of an action plan which goes to their Area Dean and Archdeacon, and can help secure funding and resources so their church buildings become more viable.

Nicola hopes that churches which have already been through the process will continue to help

## Case study:

Caroline Waitt, churchwarden at St Aidan's Church, Thorneyburn, explains how the scheme supported rural churches in the Bellingham Deanery:

"It helped us to look outward at other churches, seeing a wider perspective and a broader population than our own worship community. It has enabled us to share ideas and work together."

There is a focus on sharing the wild, spiritual spaces which exist within the Deanery. Indeed, there is a church trail from Elsdon to Bellingham, with possibility of more trails elsewhere.

This summer, St Aidan's will be welcoming visitors from a group of Hong Kong nationals who are currently based in the North East. They will visit the churchyard as part of a project to explore British culture.

Moves are afoot to install a toilet and a small servery at St Aidan's, with the toolkit essential in helping to source funding.

Caroline added: "The toolkit helps you to think about everything – including the future – in a really organised way. It makes you think as a community church and not just as a congregation."



Left, Revd Dr Claire Maxim St Aidan's, Thorneyburn, and above, at St Peter's, Falstone with churchwarden Jill Swaile and treasurer Katrine Anderson following the Aspire Assessment.

others which are just getting started. She added: "Those who have been through the process - the people who attend those churches and community members - have done a great job of supporting each other within their benefices. There is the informal support out there as well as the help provided via the toolkit."

Yvonne explained that the scheme was built

on previous projects delivered under the 'Inspired North East' programme, which helped congregations to develop their buildings as a place for worship, community use and as heritage assets. Nationally, there has already been huge interest in the toolkit, with the Churches Conservation Trust encouraging PCCs in other parts of England to use it.

All churches across Newcastle Diocese are

encouraged to use the free toolkit, which can help in their benefices and deaneries as part of mission planning. There is a lot of information about the toolkit on the Diocesan website, including videos and guidance on developing an action plan, and the 101 Open and Sustainable Checklist.

Visit [newcastle.anglican.org/rcfe](https://newcastle.anglican.org/rcfe) to download your free copy.

# Encouraging giving mechanisms

By Joanne Christie,  
Generous Giving Team Leader

One of the biggest challenges faced by churches is to meet their day-to-day costs, and also the contribution that allows the parish to play a part in the shared financial commitment of the Diocese, which enables the flourishing of our ministry and mission.

So, wherever we can make life easier in this respect, we're keen to help. Part of the joy of working in the Generous Giving Team, is the many opportunities to meet with people and parishes throughout the Diocese.

We met with a team from St Mary Magdalene in the Mitford and Hebron benefice who are introducing new ways to allow people to give. St Mary Magdalene has now joined the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), an established service for managing Direct Debit giving, that includes optional inflationary increases and automated collection of Gift Aid. For treasurer Carol Thompson, this represents a welcome reduction in workload!

On a visit to Redesdale and North Tyne churches we met fantastic volunteers from Falstone and Thorneyburn who, having had success with the PGS, were keen to hear how



Joanne Christie with the Revd Dr Claire Maxim.

they could develop and promote Online Giving, and in particular how QR codes can be beneficial in this context.

At St John the Evangelist, Otterburn, we talked to treasurer, Gill Chilvers, about how the church can make revenue from their car park through use of QR codes and by working with the parking app [www.justpark.co.uk](http://www.justpark.co.uk).

Please speak to us if you want to learn about Legacy Giving, to encourage those gifts that can have a transformative effect on the work of the church, including availability of free wills through our partnership with [www.farewill.com](http://www.farewill.com).

If a member of our team hasn't been to your parish yet and you would welcome our input, please get in touch with us and we'd be delighted to visit you. Contact Joanne at [j.christie@newcastle.anglican.org](mailto:j.christie@newcastle.anglican.org). For more information click the Generous Giving link from the homepage [www.newcastle.anglican.org](http://www.newcastle.anglican.org).



Generous Giving Team, Leanne Conway-Wilcox, Dennis Fancett and Joanne Christie.

## Digital rollout rolls on!

By Leanne Conway-Wilcox,  
Generous Giving Adviser

Thanks to funding from the Archbishops' Council, the Generous Giving Team distributed free contactless giving devices just before Easter, allowing 30 parishes to accept donations by the tap of a card. Workshops were held to train churches on how to set them up and use them effectively. Aside from allowing churches to revolutionise the way in which they accept donations, it was a fantastic opportunity for the team to talk to parishes about other ways to support generosity in their churches.

Contactless donation stations are a great way to encourage giving, particularly from those in the wider community who may not be regular givers. In a society that is moving away from cash, allowing contactless giving will help parishes to



Leanne Conway-Wilcox pictured during the rollout.

increase much needed donations.

Since the rollout, many more devices are now a regular feature at church services, life events, and fundraisers across the diocese. In the first few weeks alone since the rollout, we've heard some really encouraging success stories.

St John's in Whorlton received a CollecTin,

which churchwarden, Sandra Robson, has found to be an invaluable addition to their church. She said: "It's easy to use and has proved particularly useful at baptisms."

Another success story came from Gosforth Parish which held a fundraiser to support a project at their church the weekend after receiving the device. In addition to cash donations, they received over £300 in contactless donations on their new device!

During the rollout, we also worked with parishes to create online giving campaigns, allowing givers to click on a donation webpage or simply scan a QR code from their phone. We've since seen fundraising pages set up for general giving, building funds, organ repairs and even security systems!

• If your parish hasn't yet got started with digital giving, please get in touch at: [l.conwaywilcox@newcastle.anglican.org](mailto:l.conwaywilcox@newcastle.anglican.org)

## A healthy attitude towards finances and giving

By Dennis Fancett,  
Giving Ministry Adviser

I particularly love walking along our beaches and coast path. Watching the waves and the tides reminds me of God: on the one hand His constant, unchanging, unfailing nature – always there, whatever else is happening, whilst at the same time, forever different, never moving in quite the same way as the day before.

The way the tides roll in, then back out, again and again, speaks to me about God's heart for generosity. He gives to us, and we give back to Him. He gives to us, never in quite exactly the same way as before. There's always something new and fresh about it, and once again, we give back to Him. That's how life is supposed to be.

God wants us to be joyful recipients of His

outstanding generosity, and then to likewise be generous in return, giving away part of what we receive, giving both to and through our local church as well as to the wider community and good causes that we see around us. Our lives are not designed to be storage tanks, keeping what we have, but conduits through which the generosity of God eternally flows – in and out.

Do we feel that overwhelming sense of wanting to respond to God's own generosity when we consider how much we give to our own parish? Do we sense that our giving is part of our worship, a way of saying thank you for something we ourselves have received from Him?

Positively considering these questions form the cornerstone of a healthy attitude to our finances and giving. God wants so much more for us than to be simply giving out of a

Newcastle  
Diocese  
Generosity Week  
2023 - Sunday  
24th September  
to Sunday 1st  
October

SAVE THE  
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sense of duty or obligation. His desire is for our giving to be part of our overall response to Him, an expression of our praise and worship. As Jesus said, where your treasure is, there your heart will be as well, so let's pause for a moment to consider, and ensure both our hearts and our finances are firmly rooted in the Kingdom of God.

• Dennis is available to visit your parish, benefice or deanery to talk more about God's heart for generosity.  
Email: [d.fancett@newcastle.anglican.org](mailto:d.fancett@newcastle.anglican.org) or phone 07467 563311.

# Engaging with children and youth in our Diocese

## Welcoming children and young people to church

Children and young people are integral to our churches. 'Growing Younger' and more diverse is a key priority for the Church of England with the aim of doubling the number of children and young, active disciples by 2030.

To achieve this, we can:

**1. Pray** – Put children and young people in the weekly intercessions, ask the headteacher of your local school what you can pray for, create prayer opportunities in your outside spaces. When we pray together, we show God our heart, and we want our hearts to be filled with passion for transforming the lives of young people across our Diocese.

**2. Work together** – Look for other churches or groups who want to do children or youth activities in your area or existing groups such as Boys' or Girls' Brigade. Joining forces helps to increase the pool of volunteers and enable better resourcing for the activities.

**3. Get creative** – Pizza Church, Lego Club, Grow-baby, Toddler Group, Homework Club, Milkshake Club - all these are running across our region and have seen success in reaching families who can't come to Sunday services.

Our Children and Youth Team are here to help you to think creatively about some new ideas or strategies. Speak to Tara at:

**t.russell@newcastle.anglican.org.**

**Want to know more about Growing Faith?**

Watch this brilliant video at:

**<https://youtu.be/f3qS07A9sEU>**

Have a look at this research: **<https://www.growingfaithconnections.org/>**

We are also delighted that Ignite Alnwick has been announced as one of the 12 Growing Faith Learning Hubs across the country. Together with Newcastle Diocese and many other partners, they will be exploring creative ways to connect with young people and to grow new worshipping communities.

If you would like more information, please contact Tara at: **t.russell@newcastle.anglican.org**



## Hexham Abbey's Children's Corner

**By Revd Dr Henry Hope**

We were very fortunate to receive a generous grant from the Diocesan Children and Youth team to help us with the refurbishment of our Children's Corner at Hexham Abbey. The refurbishment came at an opportune time, when the weather was cold and utility bills soaring. The space has been much used throughout the winter months, especially by those with small children, providing an inviting, warm and safe space throughout the week, whenever the Abbey is open.

Our new display boards are a prominent feature of the refurbished corner, sharing all of the children's and young people's activities which we provide here at the Abbey. We enjoy showing weekly news of our various worship themes and projects, making our children and youth a much more visible, much more central presence within our community.



# The Roost

**By Beth Rookwood, Pioneer Minister and Roost Team Leader**

Did you know that there are 60,000 people aged 16-24 in Northumberland? I wonder what you think life might be like for them. As for many here, the rural landscape has much to celebrate - incredible beaches and hills, loyal and caring communities, local produce and artisans... and yet, there are many challenges. If you don't drive, it's hard; if you're looking for a job, it's hard; if you need mental health support, it's hard; if you're a young adult who would like to meet other young adults, it's hard!

The Roost is a charity with links to the Diocese which seeks to support these young adults, particularly in the areas of wellbeing and spirituality. Our Roost Community meets in small groups - online and in person - and monthly in our meadow in Netherwitton.

Inspired by the Northumbrian Saints, we work, play, pray and eat together. The gatherings are simple, inclusive, and all are welcome - of any faith or none. We have recently been exploring our rhythm of life



together, asking what is it that God is calling us to be and to do in this place at this time, and we are looking forward to being commissioned into this way of life.

The photo is of our Easter morning gathering - a time of poetry, prayer, and telling the story of light from darkness, hope from despair, together - before enjoying some breakfast cooked over the fire - there's something about reading the scriptures outside that is a special link to the way Jesus talked and spoke with his friends.

Our Roost meadow is a space to plant and grow - ourselves and actual produce! It's amazing how many people come and say 'I just feel better when I'm here.' Being outside is good for our bodies and souls - it puts us

in touch with the rhythms of creation and of nature; it opens up contemplation as well as conversation.

Our gardening and craft clubs create fabulous things - that we then share with each other, and with the local community. Our next harvest celebration day is September 9th - one for your diaries!

The other strand of our work is chaplaincy with sixth forms across the region and we are excited to be developing this soon. We listen, encourage, support and respond to the needs, the longings, the hopes and hopelessness of this age group - and support staff too. If you know any young adults who may like to link with us, please share our details with them - or why not invite us to get together with you and them for a cuppa.

If this sparks something in you, perhaps helping as a volunteer, donating, or in any other way, do contact us. More information at: [www.roostcommunity.org](http://www.roostcommunity.org)  
[info@roostcommunity.org](mailto:info@roostcommunity.org)  
 Insta: @theroostnorthumberland

## St Mary Magdelene, Prudhoe, by Revd Daniel Freyhan

Last Christmas, a team of over 50 volunteers (plus four baby Jesuses), representing at least six local churches welcomed over 140 children from six local schools into the church building, where they travelled back in time to experience the magic of the very first Christmas for themselves.

They met shepherds, wise people, Simeon and Anna in the temple, then made crafts and asked questions of the characters, before finally meeting Mary, Joseph and the child Jesus! There were simple scripts and fun costumes at each station, as well as interesting smells and fun things to see and touch.

Feedback from the schools was over-



whelmingly positive. This was an evangelistic outreach that fits neatly with the school curriculum and both supports

and wows the teachers.

• If you'd like to know more contact Daniel at [rev.d.freyhan@gmail.com](mailto:rev.d.freyhan@gmail.com).

# Feelings of hope and joy at the Cathedral



Light at the End of the Tunnel, Newcastle Cathedral. Pictures: ©Victoria Wai



As a final hurrah for Newcastle Cathedral's four-year *Common Ground in Sacred Space* redevelopment project, visitors were invited to see the space in a new light with an audio-visual art trail.

'Light at the End of the Tunnel' featured the work of six artists known for being creative with light and sound.

Laura Simmonds, the Cathedral's Learning and Activities Officer said: "The artists were inspired by historic objects and spiritual spaces in the Cathedral. *The Brass Eagle Takes Flight* by Frederick Worrell was projected onto the reredos behind our Pre-Reformation brass lectern and made for some beautiful photographs.

"Multiminded Design's *Look Into the Light* was another showstopper. This was a seven-min-

ute projection-mapped animation and soundscape which visitors could experience in the crypt."

The other commissioned artists were Egypt Clarke, Graham Dolphin and Lizzie Lovejoy – all from the local area.

Julia Snowdin, an artist from Coventry, also brought her colourful, wheelchair-accessible 'Dot Dome' which proved a popular sensory experience for children and families.

Although the Cathedral's National Lottery Heritage Funding came to an end in April, there's still a vibrant programme of activities planned for the rest of the year, in the period leading up to the installation of a new Dean. For the full list of upcoming events, please visit [newcastlecathedral.org.uk/whats-on](http://newcastlecathedral.org.uk/whats-on)

# Shaun the Sheep wins Cathedral approval

A free public art trail will add colour to Newcastle this summer – and Newcastle Cathedral has agreed to sponsor one of its prominent sculptures.

Following the success of *Great North Snowdogs* in 2016 and *Elmer's Great North Parade* in 2019, *Shaun the Sheep on the Tyne* will run from 19 July – 27 September 2023, raising funds for St Oswald's Hospice.

The sculpture to be sponsored by the Cathedral hasn't yet been revealed, but it will be one of 50 super-sized exhibits designed by a local artist, based on the children's TV character Shaun the Sheep. The theme will also resonate with the Cathedral's heritage and sacred connections.

Clare MacLaren, Canon for Music and Liturgy at Newcastle Cathedral said: "The whole team at Newcastle Cathedral – staff, clergy and volunteers – are delighted to join the flock by



Shaun the Sheep (from a visit last November) with Cathedral staff members Amy Carrithers and Isabel Hunt.

sponsoring one of the *Shaun the Sheep on the Tyne* sculptures.

"The trail will help support and raise awareness of St Oswald's incredible work, and there'll also be an exciting Learning Programme connected to the trail, which we look forward to promoting."

Visit [shaunonthetyne.co.uk](http://shaunonthetyne.co.uk) or find the trail on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

The Cathedral will be hosting a series of 'Shaun the Sheep' inspired activities over the summer. To find out more about their baa-rilant programme, visit [newcastlecathedral.org.uk/whats-on](http://newcastlecathedral.org.uk/whats-on).

Since being commissioned as Interim Dean in January, I have received a tremendously warm welcome at the Cathedral and from around the Diocese. My husband, Chris, had already become a regular worshipper at the Cathedral while I was still in Canterbury in the role of Acting Dean. He too has found the Cathedral a warm and welcoming place and we have both been struck by the diversity of people involved in Cathedral life and by the hardworking team of staff and volunteers serving here.

As many of you will have discovered, following the successful National Lottery Heritage Fund project, the building has been imaginatively and beautifully re-ordered so that it now offers a flexible space in which to develop worship as well as offering countless opportunities for special social and educational events.

Another area of work which the Chapter sees as absolutely vital in the mission of the Cathedral is the Lantern Initiative. Almost at any time of the day, if you visit the Cathedral, you will meet people who have come in to find warmth, shelter and company,



## View from the Lantern

By the Very Revd Jane Hedges, Interim Dean of Newcastle



many of whom are sleeping on our streets. Our clergy, staff and volunteers are here to offer welcome and support to all those who are acutely vulnerable and too easily marginalised.

Some excellent work has also begun in the Education Team and the Cathedral is committed to resourcing this work so that our ministry to children and families grows alongside our outreach to adults.

The work of our Music Department has been another major area of growth,

through which we reach out to children and young people from diverse backgrounds and our Director of Music is currently involved in a new project with schools which will hopefully take choral music into the lives of many more children.

The process for appointing the next Dean of Newcastle is now well underway. A selection panel led by the Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley, our new Diocesan Bishop is responsible for the process and shortlisted candidates will be interviewed at the beginning of June.

It is very much hoped that the new Dean will be installed sometime during the autumn and this will be a hugely exciting time in the life of the Cathedral with a new Dean and new Bishop working together to serve all the people of the Newcastle Diocese.

Although my time as Interim Dean of Newcastle will, alas, be short, it is a joy to play a small part in the Cathedral's ongoing story at a time of great opportunity in its life and that of the Diocese.

It is set to be a busy summer ahead at Hexham Abbey – and there really is something for everyone at a historic building which is undoubtedly a national treasure.

Dating back to 674, the Abbey has long been a place of interest as well as an important place of worship. It is now as popular as ever, with around 70,000 people visiting each year.

Part of the former medieval monastery was relaunched as a visitor museum and refectory café back in 2014, and this now enables tourists, schools and community groups to explore more than 1,300 years of history.

The Abbey's exhibition centre offers an interactive experience, with displays, lights, sounds and video demonstrations enabling children and adults to learn about the Abbey's history which includes a beautifully preserved Saxon crypt, medieval painted panels, stone sculptures, Victorian stained-glass windows, a 'night stair' and other features associated with the Abbey's origins as a monastic church.

As well as being a centre for education, it is a venue for weddings, funerals, conferences, festivals, film screenings and more.

An eclectic mix of key events this year has included a Northumberland Scouts' service in April, while the Abbey played a key role during the weekend of the King's Coronation in May, which involved a county celebration of the Coronation with the Lord Lieutenant of

# Historic Abbey is a national treasure with a local heart



Northumberland, the Duchess of Northumberland.

The Abbey's Parish Centre, gift shop and café are all busy – yet despite all the visitor attractions and offerings, the Rector of Hexham, the Revd David Glover said the primary role of the Abbey, which has a very vibrant congregation, has always been as a place of worship.

Director of Music, Michael Haynes, works

with a 55-strong choir which splits into two groups to cover four services per week. The Abbey is working towards the 50th anniversary of its renowned Phelps organ next year.

Keeping such a grand old building functioning is a remarkable feat. It is a parish church with challenges akin to those of a cathedral, yet its status means the Abbey does not receive central funding.

However, with structural repairs an ongoing priority, the Abbey has been grateful to receive grant funding from various sources over the years.

"The Abbey is a national treasure," said David. "We want to make it accessible to all and we work hard as a team and as a community to do that. We meet various challenges and our patrons, Lord Allendale and the Mercers' Company, are excellent patrons."

"Everything we do is all possible with a great staff team and over 170 dedicated volunteers."

• There is a full programme of events taking place at the Abbey over the summer. For further information and event listings visit: [hexhamabbey.org.uk](http://hexhamabbey.org.uk)



**By Tom Moorcroft,  
Communications Assistant**

**B**ill Devonshire, who dedicated over 22 years of his life to the Diocese of Newcastle, was one of the 74 men and 74 women to receive the Royal Maundy Money this year.

Bill was nominated to receive the honour by Revd Alison Hardy, who praised Bill for his dedication to the Benefice of Embleton.

Revd Alison said: "Bill is a good and faithful servant of Christ; homely, straightforward and giving of himself."

"Bill loved leading worship at Rock and Craster. He was always pleased to be given the opportunity to illustrate God's story through stories from his own rich and full life."

"He was a worthy and appreciative recipient of the Royal Maundy, and has received a day full of new stories to share!"

Bill, now retired but still retaining his Permission to Officiate, was a Reader for over 30 years, worshipping in the Diocese of Oxford for eight years before making a move to Newcastle.

Bill said: "Receiving the invitation was very exciting, but when I arrived at York Minster I felt a little nervous. However, when the King and Queen Consort arrived the solemnity of the occasion started to sink in – we were there for something very special!"

"When receiving the money, the King leaned in very close and said: 'Thank you very much

# Former Diocesan reader receives Maundy Money honour

for all you do.' He was so close and very sincere. This was the King saying something very special to me and nobody else – what a moment in my life!"

"This happens to only a few, but what a privilege to be one of them."

Also receiving Maundy Money was Bishop Helen-Ann's mother Pat Francis. Pat was nominated by the Bishop of Durham, the Rt Revd Paul Butler, for her services to Durham Cathedral and the wider Diocese of Durham.

Pat said that she was greatly honoured to be a recipient of the Royal Maundy coins.

Bishop Paul said: "Pat is an astonishingly faithful and dedicated servant to Durham Cathedral and the wider Diocese, as is her

husband Jim. We are hugely grateful to them both for their remarkable contributions and they are rightly proud that their daughter is now Bishop of Newcastle."

The Maundy Money, which is handed out every year to recipients from Church of England dioceses across the country – as well as Anglican and Ecumenical partners – is presented in two purses, one red and one white.

The white purse contains a set of specially minted silver Maundy coins, whereas the red purse contains a £5 and a fifty pence commemorative coins.

This was King Charles III's first Royal Maundy service, and his second since leading the service in 2022 as Prince Charles.



**Bill proudly holding his Maundy Money.**



**Pat Francis with husband Jim and daughter Bishop Helen-Ann.**



**Bill meets the King.**



St John's Percy Main

# Newcastle Diocese celebrates the Coronation

People came together in churches across our Diocese to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III with a range of special services and community events.

For more photos visit our website [newcastle.anglican.org](http://newcastle.anglican.org)



Bishop's Primary School, Ashington



Newcastle Cathedral - The Dean and Bishop Helen-Ann



St Paul's Dudley watching the service



St Peter's Falstone



Charlton Court Care Home celebrated with Church of the Good Shepherd



St John's Sleekburn



St Cuthbert's Bedlington



Newburn Parish



Holy Trinity Embleton



Morpeth Parish



The Lord Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear joins Dean Jane Hedge's at the Cathedral's big picnic



Christ Church North Shields



St Mary's Monkseaton



St John's Kingston Park



Holy Trinity Jesmond



St Andrew's Cambois

# A tasty treat with huge significance

Chocolate bars were handed out to the near 1,000 strong congregation during Bishop Helen-Ann's inauguration at Newcastle Cathedral.

But they weren't just any chocolate bars – there was a huge significance behind the tasty treats, which came in wrappers specially designed by art and design students from Duke's School, Ashington, which is part of the Northumberland Church of England Academy.

The chocolate itself was from Tony's Chocolonely – a company devoted to

shining a light on its mission for slave-free chocolate. It's a subject which links back to the first Bishop of Newcastle, Ernest Wilberforce, who was the grandson of William Wilberforce, leader of the movement to abolish the slave trade.

The unique wrapper design incorporates Celtic and Māori symbolism. It references Coldingham, in the Scottish Borders, where Bishop Helen-Ann was baptised, and the Diocese of Newcastle, where she has now been inaugurated as Bishop. The Māori reference is a nod to her time as Bishop of Waikato in New Zealand.



## Christian Aid: A thank you to volunteers

By Helen Cunningham, Church Engagement and Fundraising Officer (North East & Cumbria)

During Volunteers' Week (1-7 June), we are taking a moment to extend a heartfelt thank you to all our dedicated volunteers.

It is through the funds and awareness raised during Christian Aid Week that we can make a difference in the lives of people like Esther Saizi. For 10 years, Esther grew pigeon peas, but could never secure a fair price for her crop. However, when she joined a programme run by our local partner, the Nandolo Farmers' Association, and started selling as part of a co-operative, she was able to earn a fairer wage to feed her family and support her daughters, Ziwoone and Rashida.

None of this would have been possible without our inspirational volunteers!

The FLAKE Churches in Northumberland held a successful online Silent Auction during Christian Aid Week, allowing people to offer their skills and gifts to help raise



money. Meanwhile folks at St John's, Killingworth volunteered their time to hold a "Dream On" cheese and wine fundraising evening. Many more people used their time and talents to make a difference to some of the world's poorest communities.

Senior Volunteering Officer, Ian Hind, said: "Supporters are the backbone of Christian Aid's mission to end poverty. Without their unwavering dedication and commitment, we simply couldn't make the impact we do."

For more information about Christian Aid, please visit our website [www.christianaid.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.christianaid.org.uk/volunteer).

## A tribute to Canon Frank Dexter

Canon Frank Dexter was known to many across our Diocese and the news of his death on 13 April, aged 82, was received with great sadness. Frank served in Elswick and as Rural Dean of Newcastle West Deanery, and for 20 years as vicar of St George's Jesmond. On retirement he continued his ministry at Hexham Abbey and elsewhere.

He served as Chair of the Board of Social Responsibility; as member of Diocesan Synod for 24 years – 10 as chair of the House of Clergy – of Bishop's Council for 18 years, and General Synod for 13 years. Beyond this, he was, as Bishop Martin says, "highly valued as a senior colleague, full of wisdom, insight, and common sense."

There is a full obituary written by Canon Ian Flintoft on our website: [newcastle.anglican.org/frank-dexter](http://newcastle.anglican.org/frank-dexter)