

Our churches welcome young climate walkers

The Diocese of Leeds was pleased to welcome walkers from the Young Christian Climate Network (YCCN) last week, as they came to the



diocese as part of the Relay to COP26, Rise to the Moment.

The YCCN walkers were welcomed into our diocese at St Bartholomew's Marsden on September 14, with a short service, and the following day headed to Huddersfield to be hosted by Bishop Jonathan Gibbs, Bishop of Huddersfield, and the Revd Canon Rachel Firth, Vicar of Huddersfield, at an evening event.

The next day the walkers reached Drighlington for a service at the Methodist church there, where they attended a service with Kim Leadbeater,

MP for Batley and Spennings. On Friday September 17 the group arrived in Leeds and were welcomed by the West Yorkshire Mayor Tracy Brabin, Alex Sobel, MP for Leeds North West, and Leeds City Councillors Al Garthwaite and Emma Flint.

They were also joined in City Square by over

100 people from churches across Leeds for 'Climate Prayer in the Square' led by the Revd Jon Swales of Lighthouse West Yorkshire and St George's Church.

The relay aims to raise awareness of the issues climate change is causing, especially for those in climate-vulnerable countries.



Wow factor at Wakefield Cathedral

A joyful diocesan celebration took place at Wakefield Cathedral when Bishop Nick confirmed 27 candidates from across our region.

"Wow! What a special service!" was the reaction of one of the Confirmation candidates last Sunday at Wakefield Cathedral.

A congregation drawn from across four of our five



episcopal areas was in the cathedral to support the candidates young and old, who were confirmed by Bishop Nick.

Dean Simon Cowling, was delighted to welcome so many people: "A service like this shows that God is at work in our parishes and communities."

Stormy weather

Bishop Nick Baines

In an address recently, Mark Oakley (Honorary Canon Theologian of Wakefield Cathedral) spoke of the need for “a theology of the shipwrecked”. The thing about poets is that they find the words and images that cut through all the debris of busy and complex lives and open up our thinking and feeling. I think that is what Mark did when he used that image.

Many of us have had enough of banging on about the pandemic, lockdowns and uncertainty about the future. We long for, if not a return to ‘normality’ – which is impossible, then at least a progression to a life more predictable. And yet there are so many people in our communities who have been wrecked by the losses and laments of the last two years. Cast adrift by forces and phenomena beyond their control, their bearings have been submerged beneath the turbulent waves.

So, I understand the image of the ‘shipwrecked’. And I also recognize the choices this faces us with. Do we float and hope that someone else will rescue us? Do we wait for daylight and some new orientation? Or do we hear the words of Jesus’s friends to Bartimaeus the blind man: “Take heart. Get up. He is calling you.”



I write during a fuel crisis and genuine fear among many people that heating a home and feeding a family will prove an insurmountable – unaffordable – challenge this coming winter. The rise in National Insurance coupled with the end of furlough and the removal of the £20 Universal Credit uplift (given that many recipients are working all the hours there are) whips up a perfect storm of fear. I need not go on, but the future does not herald “sunlit uplands” for too many people.

Whatever the causes of our current challenges, what is certain is that the church – that is, Christians who follow the Jesus who came not to be served, but to serve – has a vocation to look out for those who suffer. And that has to happen in our parishes.

Whatever the winter holds for us, we pray, we serve and we remain faithful to the God who is faithful to us.

**+Nick
Bishop of Leeds**

Health conference in Sudan supported by our diocese

An interfaith health conference has been held in Sudan, thanks to support from people across the Diocese of Leeds.

The Rt Revd Ismail Gabriel Abudigin, Diocesan Bishop of El Obeid, has recently organised a health conference in his area, helping make



people more aware of the dangers of both COVID-19 and HIV.

The conference was made possible by funds raised by the Diocese of Leeds’ Sudan appeal, which raised some £70,000 last year for our five partner dioceses in the country.

To the delight of those organising the conference, the teaching was delivered by Muslim officials from the Sudanese Ministry of Health, marking a step in interfaith relations in the region.

St Mary's Kettlewell named “Best churchyard in the Dales” by national countryside charity

One of our churchyards in the Dales has been declared the best in North Yorkshire and praised for its wonderful range of wildlife.



St Mary's Church, Kettlewell is the “overall and unanimous winner” of the first-ever Best Churchyard competition held in the county by CPRE The Countryside Charity - formerly known as the Campaign to Protect Rural England.



Churchyards at Giggleswick and Lothersdale were also praised by the judges.

The charity said: “Kettlewell is a very busy, post-pandemic tourist hot spot, but walk down the little lane through the lych gate and you are in an area of peace, tranquillity and contemplation – the journey is immersive.

“The churchyard is big

enough to swallow many visitors whilst at the same time allowing room for sitting undisturbed on the numerous seats and enjoying the yard itself and the views of the Dales. There is a rich and developed flora with a good insect population and busy bees. Whilst many piles of wood are havens for insects there is much high-value standing dead wood in the churchyard.

Revd Di Blakey Williams, co-ordinator of the Kettlewell Churchyard Project Group, said: “The group want to say a huge thank you to all in the church and local community who give of their time and energy to tend the churchyard throughout the year.”



Class of 2021 interns gather for first time

The Diocese of Leeds' class of 2021 interns gathered for the first time on Monday to begin their year of learning and serving across the whole diocese.

The 24 interns are serving in churches in the Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield areas, spilt across two hubs in the centres of Leeds and Bradford.

The Interns Scheme runs from September 2021 until July 2022, and involves leadership experience; training in biblical studies, theology and leadership; developing



transferable work skills; and an opportunity to consider God's calling for the future.

Each week all the participants serving across the diocese of Leeds gather together for a day of teaching.

The day begins with worship and the chance to reflect together on how the placements are going.

Our call to share

**Wendy Gaunt,
Churchwarden /
Treasurer, Parish of
Wortley & Farnley**



As a teenager I had a Saturday job in a jewellers. At the end of the day we did the cashing up and it was a lot of money. As we counted, we pondered: What happened to it? How was it spent? How did it benefit us?

I'm churchwarden now in Wortley & Farnley Parish; I'm also treasurer and although I'm not sure people do actually ponder the parish share there's a perennial discussion about why we need to pay it, especially in vacancy, with all the same questions my 16-year-old self asked about those takings. When we buy things, we like to 'see' something for our money.

Yes, the vast majority of share goes to obvious things like clergy and housing. But it goes towards so much more than that, and what we can't quantify and what many don't appreciate is the 'back office' stuff; support from the teams and individuals in Church House and beyond. These highly skilled professionals provide essential support to keep us on the straight and narrow, underpinning the work we do and quietly, and often invisibly,

enabling us to bless and serve our communities.

As part of our call as Christians we are asked to give graciously, and Generosity Week's a chance to look at how and what we give. The best way to approach the how and what is by deciding to give regularly rather than giving only what we have left.

At this point I stick my treasurer's hat on. Our church encourages regular giving through the Parish Giving Scheme. Since we signed up for it, we've seen a good uptake and because it all goes into the bank the same day each month it makes payment of regular, larger amounts more doable. The share is important to us and despite some resistance through misunderstanding of its worth we always pay it.

It sometimes seems that the share is the poor relation when it comes to prioritisation, it has no glamour, no tangible return. It's a sad fact of life though that we can't choose to pay only the bills we like and that Parish Share needs to be paid, with grace, to enable a parish to flourish.

Cathedral choirs sing together after Covid break

The choirs of the cathedrals of the Diocese of Leeds are gathering together to share their love of choral music with the whole diocese this autumn.



Ripon Cathedral will be hosting the choirs of Bradford and Wakefield Cathedrals, as the Yorkshire Cathedrals Festival returns after missing 2020 due to the pandemic.

The choristers and lay clerks (adult singers) of Bradford and Wakefield Cathedrals will join Ripon Cathedral Choir for the beautiful and uplifting service of choral evensong on Saturday, October 9, at 5.30pm. Directed by Ripon's Interim Director of Music, Peter Wright, and accompanied by the dramatic notes of the historic organ, the joint choir will sing works by Vaughan Williams and John Rutter.