

CRUX

Church for a different world

Nov | Dec 2022

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 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester

CHURCH
FOR A
DIFFERENT
WORLD

FOUR EYES TO SEE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

I wonder if you ever had one of those teachers who had eyes in the back of their head and knew who was playing up even when facing the opposite direction! I think it would be handy to have four eyes in running the Christian life!

An eye to look back – November is the season of remembrance and it is helpful to look back at the saints who have helped us on the journey and the way God has been at work in our lives over the years. As Sally and I approach retirement we are incredibly grateful for the last 40 years, much of which has been spent in Manchester Diocese, and to the people we have encountered. As a teenager I had an encounter with God that led me to serve in areas of deprivation, whether in the UK or overseas, and I have been grateful to fulfil that call in some measure by God’s grace.

An eye to look up – the church year ends with celebrating Christ the King. In all the uncertainties of life around us, whether it is the immediacy of energy bills or the more long-term challenges of growing the church and fulfilling our vision to be a transforming Christian presence in the heart of every community, it is important to look to Jesus who is the Lord of the Church and the Lord over our communities. He is the King and what a King he is!

An eye to look forwards – Advent will soon be upon us as we look for the coming of Christ among us and to know His presence in our lives. The truth is that Jesus always goes before us and there are exciting times ahead for the diocese and

for ourselves. A forward-looking Church is led by vision. It doesn’t forget where it has come from, but is courageous and creative about the new things that God is doing led by His Spirit. People often ask us about retirement plans, but in reality, we simply want to land and stop before discerning where God is leading us next.

An eye to look outwards – one of my hopes for myself and the Church is that we keep looking beyond ourselves to the people around us, especially the least, the lost and the last. When we turn in on ourselves we are never at our best. Jesus said that he came to seek and save the lost – He was always looking beyond himself to the will of the Father and the world he came to save. That is such a good rule of life to follow!

We thank God for his blessing over the years and especially for all of you. May you know God’s blessing and the capacity to see with four eyes in the months and years to come.

Bishop Mark Ashcroft will retire as Bishop of Bolton in February 2023.



REMEMBERING HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

We were all deeply saddened to hear of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September.

Throughout the ten days of national mourning that followed, churches across the diocese held special services to reflect on the faith and service of the Queen and to provide opportunities for people to come together to give thanks for her life and to express their sadness.

Special prayers were said and Requiem Masses held to mark the passing of the Queen who had such a strong personal Christian faith and served the nation with commitment for over seven decades. Manchester Cathedral played an important role in bringing different faith communities together and hosted a civic service on the day before the state funeral.

Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, and Sophie, Countess of Wessex, visited the city and were met by crowds of well wishers outside the Cathedral. They read the books of condolence, lit candles in honour of the late Queen and viewed photographs of the Queen’s visit to the Cathedral in 2021.

The Dean of Manchester, Rogers Govender, said: “It was a great comfort to receive Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex and Sophie, Countess of Wessex during the period of national mourning for her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

“The Royals expressed their appreciation for the prayers of the Church and the level of affection in which the Queen and the Royal Family are held.”

APPLY FOR A FREE DIGITAL GIVING DEVICE

From 7 November, churches can apply online for free digital giving devices that have been proven to make it easier for people to give and boost the average donation by a factor of three.

With cards having overtaken cash as the preferred form of payment in society, we know that having the ability to accept digital donations is going to be key for many churches in the years to come. Enabling people to give to churches using digital mechanisms makes it easier for people to give when they wish to do so—and in many cases could be what allows that person to make a donation in the first place, given they may not be carrying cash.

Last year alone, churches across the country received digital donations of almost £4m. That's why the Church of England's National Giving Team is embarking on a three-year project to help thousands more churches get started with digital giving.

Paul Bailey, Digital Giving Advisor for the Diocese of Manchester, which is backing the plan, said:

"Some of our churches have been using digital giving devices for a few years and the feedback has been really positive. The average contactless donation is typically three times that of a cash donation, indicating that not only is the ability to make a contactless donation important, but that people also tend to give more generously when this option is available."



In our experience, the average contactless donation is about £9. We invite all churches to apply now for a device. Full training and support will be given.



Your church can apply for a free digital device from **7 November until 2 December 2022.**

Please apply by visiting www.parishbuying.org.uk/manchester-rollout



'A MILLION COLOURS' MUSIC VIDEO TO CHAMPION DIVERSITY

To celebrate Black History Month the Diocese of Manchester released 'A Million Colours' - a music video featuring a diverse group of children from Church of England schools across Manchester.

'A Million Colours' was written by singer/songwriter pair Ni-Cola Jackson and Paul Saxon as part of the Children Changing Places Project. With joyful, uplifting music and moving lyrics, it conveys the message that everyone is equal before God and people of every single colour are significant and beautiful. It includes the challenge not to remain silent, but to speak up for everyone, no matter what colour they are.

The 'A Million Colours' video is part a wider project called 'Shades', which aims to champion racial diversity and inclusion within the schools work of the diocese. The project aims to raise awareness, foster understanding of each other's differences, and instil dignity and a sense of belonging for all children, young people and adults within our school communities.

You can view the video on the diocesan YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/manchesterdiocese

The project has been particularly impactful in promoting a strong sense of racial identity for ethnically diverse children in school, church and the wider community.

In the video, children from six schools in Bolton are seen participating in the performance of the song and enjoying waving multi-coloured banners and playing air guitars.

It is hoped that schools and churches will share this music video with their school communities, learning the song and actively sharing its message.





Follow The Star THE GREAT INVITATION

Following a series of difficult Christmases, churches will be hoping that 2022 offers a chance to welcome people back to services and events that haven't been possible recently.

The Church of England is returning to the very popular Follow the Star theme, with a focus on The Great Invitation. We are encouraging everyone to share the joy of gathering together to celebrate the birth of Jesus with your family, friends and neighbours - especially after two years where this has been impossible for many.

Attractively designed resources to invite your community back to church this Christmas are available at www.churchofengland.com/Christmas.

The services and events will be specific to your community, but here you will find signposts to the national branding, reflections and more that will help you to invite people into your church - both online and in-person.

With the men's World Cup final taking place on Sunday 18 December and the change in traditions of families since the pandemic, having a more 'normal' Christmas will still mean we need to do some things differently.

We suggest holding Christmas carol services on a night other than 18 December - perhaps 17 or 19 December. But if you would like to use the World Cup final for mission, there will be some ideas on how to do that too on the above webpage.

Remember to list your in-person and online Advent and Christmas services on AChurchNearYou.com, using an Advent or Christmas tag. From the start of Advent, they will then appear on a special Christmas landing page that people will be directed to via a national advertising campaign.

KEEPING WARM THIS WINTER

The Warm Welcome Campaign is the community response to the cost of living crisis. Warm Welcome is working to equip and support thousands of free, warm, and welcoming spaces in communities across the UK to make sure that nobody is left to suffer on their own this winter.

Some of our churches have already registered as Warm Welcome spaces and others are invited to consider whether this is something they could offer.

Each warm space must be:

Free - no hidden costs

Warm - heated and able to provide basic refreshments such as tea and coffee

Welcoming - inclusive, non-judgmental spaces

Safe - robust safeguarding policies and hygiene rules. Organisations should offer basic signposting for people who need further help or support.

The Warm Welcome campaign provides a "Step by Step Guide" to help you get started and to think about whether your church is a suitable venue - e.g. can you keep it warm efficiently?

You can register your space at www.warmwelcome.uk

If you already have activities happening onsite you might want to consider whether these projects could form part of the Warm Welcome offer, or whether you could open as a Warm Welcome space in another part of the building, or earlier/ later in the day. It might be appropriate to open your building for longer on a Sunday, or on other days when you have weekly services or activities.

ENERGY COST GRANTS

The Church of England has recently announced funding of £15 million that has been made available to support parishes with their increased energy costs this winter. £592,000 is being made available to Manchester Diocese. Proposals for allocating this funding will be presented to Bishop's Council in November, with a view to making payments to churches before Christmas.

While rises in energy bills are inevitable this winter, there may also be ways you can cut down on your energy usage to keep bills under control. There are some useful tips and suggestions to help churches use less energy and keep their energy bills at

www.churchofengland.org/heating-your-church-winter
www.parishbuying.org.uk/
www.cuf.org.uk/past-events for a webinar on heating your church sustainably





SOCIAL SUPER MARKET PUTS CHURCH ON THE MAP

As the cost of living crisis escalates and impacts the ability of people on low incomes to provide food for their families, Ann Mummery visited The Church of the Apostles in Miles Platting to see how they are supporting their community.

The last time Ann visited five years ago the church was offering hot meals, known as Food for All, on a Sunday and running a night shelter once a week. During the pandemic Manchester City Council provided accommodation for rough sleepers, so the night shelter closed. Instead, the church provided emergency support in the form of food parcels for people who were isolating or shielding, and cooked and distributed 300 meals each day in liaison with the council.

Now, to address the massive need for affordable food in Miles Platting, the church has opened a Social Super Market in partnership with Greater Together Manchester. The Social Super Market is a brand new initiative to help local residents reduce the cost of their weekly food shop and prevent food waste. It offers a choice of low-cost, good quality fresh food. For £4, local people can choose from a large variety of items including groceries, fresh fruit and vegetables and some home-cooked meals, worth £35-40.

Revd Ellie Trimble, Rector of the Church of the Apostles Manchester with St Cuthbert's Miles Platting, said, "For some people there is a stigma attached to using a food bank, but the Social Super Market is just like popping to the shop. It has become popular with all kinds of different people in the area. Other than being a local resident, there are no criteria for joining. The church building is open and is the hub of the community.

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One of the biggest impacts of the Social Super Market is being here for people in a crisis situation. The whole church is trusted now and our main role is to provide some hope and pastoral care. The Super Market has opened up opportunities to provide weddings and funerals, and people tell us about their problems and ask for help.”

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Through its volunteers and networks, the church is able to signpost vulnerable people to get help with debt, housing and healthcare, and has reduced homelessness in the area. It helps people to keep well while they are waiting for support from other agencies, which can take many months. Every Friday the church supports Miles Platting Savers - a group that is helping local residents to save money together so there is a little put by for a rainy day.

The project also encourages recycling and upcycling, and has a community garden where people grow their own food. So as well as meeting a huge social need, it is working positively for climate action.

The church has demonstrated its commitment to the local community through practical action and this has resulted in increased numbers of people coming through the doors for Sunday worship. Ellie said, "One of the knock-on effects of supporting local families is that we have seen our congregation at St Cuthbert's double in size. We are seeing children attend for the first time and our monthly Messy Church is very popular." The church hopes to build on this by working with partners in the mission community to offer services that are accessible.

Lily Axworthy from Greater Together Manchester said, "We are keen for there to be a growing, nurturing, serving presence here. If the church went from this community there would be nothing left."

Greater Together Manchester can offer advice to other churches or community groups who are interested in hosting a Social Super Market. For further information, please contact Lily Axworthy at lily@greatertogthermanchester.org



A FAITH EVER EVOLVING



James Newman joined the diocese in March 2021 as the Digital Communications Officer. Born into a Christian family he was raised in a traditional way, attending Sunday School and Christian 'after school' club.

While attending high school, James says "I still went to church, but I didn't feel like I had a relationship with God."

By the time James went to college he had stopped going to church. "I would have said that I was still a Christian if someone asked, but I had other idols and spent no time trying to understand what I believed. I guess over time, I found it all quite empty; and yet, I felt that there was more to be discovered spiritually." Although he still felt sceptical, he started reading about the ideas behind God.

"He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful."
John 15:2

At the start of the Coronavirus pandemic, James lost his job and caught Covid. He had also started going to a new church in Poynton where he felt comfortable in asking important questions. "With losing my job, ending a relationship and catching Covid, it almost felt like a spiritual pruning. I'd just started going back to church so it felt like the right space to ask some of the deeper questions and explore what it is I believed".

Soon James became more active in his church, taking on a leadership role, which ultimately gave him more confidence and a "spiritual richness", enabling him to grow in his faith. During the lockdown, he started a new job at St Peter's House Chaplaincy, supporting students and staff during a difficult time of separation and isolation. He worked as part of a programme called 'The Well' which provided food parcels for students and livestream support classes including yoga, meditation and cookery.

James admits that it has not always been easy: "Part of my journey has been understanding some of the bigger, more difficult questions. I have a lot of close friends who are not Christian and for me it's really important to be able to talk and defend my 'faith' with anyone."



For me, my faith does feel like a constantly evolving journey, but I'm confident that through each season of confusion and lack of understanding, I come through stronger and more sure of what I believe and who I believe in.



OUR NEW AUTHORISED LAY MINISTERS

Over forty new Authorised Lay Ministers (ALMs) were commissioned to serve in parishes across the diocese at a special celebration at Manchester Cathedral in September. Existing ALMs were also relicensed by the Bishop of Bolton, Mark Ashcroft, in a joyful celebration.

ALMs are lay people active in church life who have been identified by their parish as having a particular gifting, vocation or calling to lay leadership. They are called and trained to work collaboratively alongside their incumbent and wider ministry teams with a distinct focus on growing, nurturing and serving the wider parish community.

Training for ALMs includes an 8-week leadership module and a 12-week ministry course that prepares them to undertake an agreed ministry role back within their local parish.

Current ministry courses include Children and Families, Community Action and Social Outreach, Digital Church and Online Media, Ecology and Creation, Mission and Evangelism, Parish Administration, Finance and Governance, Pastoral Outreach and Listening, Prayer and Spirituality, Worship and Liturgy, and Youth Work.

The next round of ALM courses will begin in January 2023 with details available soon at www.manchester.anglican.org/alm/

CHURCH FOR A DIFFERENT WORLD DIGITAL AWARDS

The Bishops of Bolton and Middleton awarded nine Church for Different World awards in recognition of churches that are reaching out to their communities in new and innovative ways.

This is the first time that the Church for a Different World awards, now in their sixth year, have had a digital focus.

Over the past two years there has been a digital revolution in our churches. As a result of the pandemic we have seen the growth of online worship and new ways of keeping in touch with people to offer pastoral support and tackle the issue of social isolation. Discipleship groups have met online and churches have reached out to their communities via Facebook, deepening relationships and showing that the Church is there for everyone.

The Bishop of Bolton, Mark Ashcroft, said: "We have been hugely impressed by the innovation shown by many of our churches over the past two years as they have found new ways to support their communities, offer different forms of worship online and deepen relationships with people using a variety of technologies."

The Bishop of Middleton, Mark Davies, said: "We are proud of the way churches have adapted and developed new skills, while remaining true to their priorities of growing, nurturing and serving. We hope that by sharing their ideas with one another our churches will be encouraged to try new things that have been shown to work well in different contexts."

The award-winning projects for 2022 are:

St James Daisy Hill

Developed their page on the national website, A Church Near You, to include video tours, online jigsaws and links to community groups.

St Mary Ellenbrook & St Andrew Boothtown

Since the end of lockdown, they have worked hard to offer both online and in-person worship, maintaining a virtual livestreamed service so that all members are catered for. The result is that people bring church into their home, they pray more intentionally for each other, and pray for people they wouldn't normally meet.



Christ Church Healey

Established livestream capability during lockdown. They continue to invest in different technologies and are keen to share their learning with other churches.

St Edmund Whalley Range and St James, Moss Side

Set up systems and trained young people to deliver livestreams on YouTube. Have engaged younger people in this important ministry and also developed their social media channels.

St Martin, Norris Bank

They have a very visual church website and use Canva to create graphics. Their weekly enews to church contacts uses MailChimp and now takes on four guises per month to engage the congregation.

Antioch Network

Antioch has an excellent website that showcases the various church plants, rather than each church having its own website. It also offers the REAP church planting course online which attracts an international audience.

St Andrew, Over Hulton

Set up a Youth Group that met over Zoom and included lots of fun and creative ideas. Strong, supportive relationships were formed during a period that focused a great deal on young people.

Holy Trinity Platt

Prospects – for people with learning disabilities – met online each month. This had to be carefully crafted to be accessible to people with learning disabilities and to meet their needs for community and support. There were separate Zoom meetings for leaders and to support parents/carers.

St Anne, Turton

They set up a Tech drop-in offering help and support with technology and an opportunity to learn new skills and improve connectivity. People appreciate this safe space to get help without any sales pressure, and to form links with other community groups.



THE ASCENSION

The Church of the Ascension in Lower Broughton will be rededicated at a special service on Saturday 19 November at 6pm. The church has been spectacularly rebuilt following a devastating fire in February 2017 that destroyed the roof and much of the interior.

The £5m restoration of a Grade II-listed church in Salford has involved many partners including insurer Ecclesiastical, local architects, contractors, engineers and project managers, with the oversight of the Diocesan Advisory Committee. The damage to the 149-year-old Church of the Ascension, which was designed by eminent Manchester architect, James Medland Taylor, occurred just after the community had spent three years fundraising and securing grants totalling £250,000 to go towards a renovation. Following years of painstaking work to restore and enhance the building, the rededication will be a joyful event to which all are welcome.

The Revd Canon Falak Sher, Curate of The Ascension, said: "The Church of the Ascension is risen from the ashes now after five years. The presence of the church at the heart of the community is uplifting for the people of Lower Broughton. I am very pleased to be able to serve the people of God here."

The Bishop of Bolton, Mark Ashcroft, said: "The Ascension is an iconic building for the people of Salford and I am thrilled that the church has re-opened and will be formally rededicated on 19 November. Now the adventure is to rebuild the living stones of a worshipping community that brings the light and life of Christ to Lower Broughton."

FAREWELL TO CRUX TEAM

As a result of the diocese's office move from Manchester to Bury in the New Year there will be some staff changes that will affect the communications team at Church House.

Both Ann Mummery, Communications Manager, and Simon Ambrose, Communications and Events Officer, will be leaving the diocese by the end of 2022. They have been responsible for authoring and editing CRUX, commissioning photography and design, and ensuring that the magazine reaches parishes on time.

Ann, who has edited about 175 issues of CRUX during her time at the diocese, said, "It's been a privilege to edit the CRUX magazine over the years and to share news about how our churches are growing, nurturing and serving. There has been so much change, but one constant is that churches remain at the heart of their communities and faithfully serve them in so many different ways."

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I've been particularly proud to see how parishes have embraced the use of social media to take their message effectively into the digital space. This has been ably supported by our digital team who provide support and training. This year's Church for a Different World digital awards demonstrate how successful this has been and is a source of many good news stories that deserve to be shared.

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 Like us, search for The Diocese of Manchester



Gemma Gardiner will be taking over as Communications Manager in December. All editorial items should be sent to her via gemmagardiner@manchester.anglican.org. Please also contact Gemma to order CRUX or to amend your order.

MANCHESTER DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE

THE HOLY LAND

In the footsteps of Jesus

with an option to visit amazing Petra

Led by the three Bishops

Rt Revd. David Walker, *Bishop of Manchester*

Rt Revd Mark Davies, *Bishop of Middleton*

& *The Bishop of Bolton*

2 November - 9 November, 2023



The Mount of Beatitudes

**LIGHTLINE
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