



# archdeacons'

## visitation news

Spring 2019 - issue 16

## Dear churchwardens

A warm welcome to all churchwardens elected this year, especially if you are holding office for the first time. As archdeacons, we look forward to working with you in partnership within the church's ministry over the next twelve months.

The 2019 visitations present an opportunity to reflect on our diocesan strategy, *growing church bringing hope*, now two years old. This acts as our vision statement and reminds us of the importance of growth in the church's life. Key to church growth is the task of bringing the hope of Christ into places where hope can be in short supply.

As we write these words, all the uncertainties over the future of our country and our relationship with Europe still linger and many in the diocese live with worry and deep concern over the eventual shape of Brexit and its potential impact on our lives.

The power of the Gospel is that it brings hope into even the most intractable situations and our (relatively) new vision makes the link between a church that is constantly being renewed and refreshed, and at the same time offering that renewal and refreshment to those who are vulnerable, amidst all the changes we face both in our personal lives and in our parishes.

It's God who gives the gift of growth to his church. Behind the phrase *growing church* is the image that St Paul's speaks of in his first letter to the Corinthians – 'I planted... but God gives the growth'. The church only experiences authentic growth when we allow God to work in our lives as individuals and as a parish community, and when we co-operate with and support all that God is already doing.

*Growing church* takes many forms. We pray that we as individuals will grow in depth of personal faith and trust in God in the everyday things of life. Numerical growth of our church communities is vital if the church

is to sustain itself as each generation passes through. Growth in the local church's impact is also important, especially in those places where perhaps we are small in number and where we are not fulfilling our potential.

The diocesan vision is that we *become* a growing church. We want to experience growth at every level of our lives but, most of all, we long to become a church in which growth is 'bloodstream' not 'bolted on', part of our 'DNA' rather than a phase that we go through.

It is growth that ensures we are able to continue offering the hope of Christ to those around us. It's not that hope is lacking in our communities, or in the lives of those around us, because all human beings are made in the image of God and having inbuilt hope is part of our humanity. However, as Christians, we believe that sharing the hope of Christ is about making visible and strengthening the hope that is already there.

Bringing the hope of Christ alongside the hope that all human beings already have, by virtue of being human, is one of the most powerful things we can be involved in. As hope grows in the lives of all our communities, we believe that the church will be seen to grow in numbers, in spiritual depth, and in its capacity to reach out to all in the midst of the deep uncertainties we face in our lives.

Our thanks again to Ecclesiastical for their generous sponsorship of the Archdeacons' Visitation News.

We wish you all a fruit-full and hope-full year as churchwardens.



**The Venerable  
Mark Wroe**

Archdeacon  
of Northumberland



**The Venerable  
Peter Robinson**

Archdeacon  
of Lindisfarne

Produced and printed by





## Our new Archdeacon writes...

As I start as the new Archdeacon of Northumberland, I find myself asking: How did I get here? What am I doing? Who is with me? Oh, and have you seen the... (insert the latest thing we still cannot find after moving house!)? Perhaps you are asking similar questions as you start as Churchwarden for the first time, or second time, or even more times!

How did I get here? I was born in Newcastle upon Tyne, but grew up slightly further south in Chester-le-Street, County Durham. Church was always in the mix growing up; the legacy of a grandfather who was a vicar, as well as both my aunt and great aunt serving abroad as missionaries in Japan and India respectively. Plus my father is a church organist and choirmaster, and works for a clerical outfitters. And my mother has done at least three stints as churchwarden for her local parish church over the years: this means I have an instinctive admiration and huge appreciation of all of you who hold the great responsibility of churchwarden in your parishes.

As a teenager, I rebelled against church for about three weeks and then got involved in a brilliant church youth group, which nurtured my faith and vocation. A degree in theology and religious studies in London was followed by a brief stint as a youth worker back in the northeast, before theological college in Cambridge. My hugely positive experience as a youth, and a youth worker, in the church means I have an ongoing commitment to see children and young people flourish in worship, leadership and mission.

I served my curacy in Nuneaton in Coventry Diocese, then spent 8 years as vicar of St Alban's Windy Nook in Gateshead (very aptly named, and coincidentally the neighbouring parish to where my grandfather served as vicar). For the last 11 years, I have had the joy and privilege of being vicar of Holy Trinity Jesmond and St Barnabas & St Jude Sandyford (until 2015). I was also Area Dean of Newcastle Central Deanery from April 2017, and Acting Archdeacon of Northumberland for 2018.

What am I doing? In all the places I have served I have always tried to hold worship

and mission together. I believe that the more we open ourselves up to God, the more we discover ourselves opened out in witness and service to others. To put it another way, we cannot love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength without also loving our neighbour as ourself.

I am particularly grateful that my role as Archdeacon includes a Diocesan-wide brief for supporting and reshaping the Diocesan response to social responsibility. I am learning that there are so many creative, dynamic, generous and sacrificial ways in which individual parishes and congregations are responding to those in need in our communities. Many are humbling examples of how we are living out our shared calling to bring hope.

Who is with me? We believe and trust that we live in the promise of 'God with us'. At its best, the Church is the wonderful, beautiful and surprising family of God, sharing and extending the gracious hospitality of Jesus Christ in our communities. I hope I can help encourage us all in knowing and sharing the transforming love of God.

And of course my family wonderfully accompanies me on this new journey too: my wife Caroline, and our three daughters (aged 15, 13 and 9 years old), plus our overly adventurous and food-obsessed Labrador. As a family, we love living and working in Newcastle and like to take advantage of our wonderful city, beautiful coastline and stunning Northumberland countryside as often as possible.

But new starts also promise new friendships and relationships. I am looking forward to working with you and with other new colleagues across the archdeaconry and diocese.

Have you seen the...? Keys? Phone? Tin opener? Or who knows what else? Who knows what we might find and discover together in this next year. Life in the church can be so wonderfully unpredictable! But I hope it will include the joy of journeying together in faith, hope and love as we work, pray and serve together in Jesus' name.

**Mark Wroe**  
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# Parish Pixels – show us what makes your church special



This year, our church competition celebrates churches across the UK through photography. However, it is far from just a photography competition!

We'll be asking every church to send us a single photo showing what makes their church special, whether taken by a professional or a member of the congregation on a smartphone.

We know that every church, its congregation, and community is unique. From the volunteer who holds everything together, to the children's groups who brighten up the Sunday services. From the beautiful flower gardens,

to the exceptional architecture of your church building. No two churches are the same, and we want to celebrate what makes your church special.

How would you show how unique and special your church is in just one photo?

Find out more about the competition and how your church can enter at:

[www.ecclesiastical.com/parishpixels](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/parishpixels)



Contains promotional material

## Insurance advice that's right up your street

**Our Church Insurance Consultants offer a locally-based advisory service to churches up and down the country, either face-to-face or over the phone.**

Our five consultants are responsible for a particular region of the country, and are available to visit your church and parish to give on-the-spot advice, as well as scheduling seminars and training. This could include help with explaining your insurance policy, to giving risk management presentations, and providing churchwarden training. Each member of the team isn't just an expert in insurance, they also have a deep involvement with the church themselves. Thanks to their background in the church, they appreciate and understand the concerns that PCCs and congregations have.

Through support and guidance, and by giving our customers the reassurance that they are doing things safely and securely, our consultants can enable churches to focus on what really matters: worship, mission and outreach. With their support, we hope to help make our nation's churches a vibrant, vital and exciting part of the community for the twenty-first century and beyond.

Find out more about your Church Insurance Consultant in your area on our website:

[www.ecclesiastical.com/cic](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/cic)

## Our specialist customer service team

Our dedicated church customer service team have a deep understanding of the specialist needs of those who look after, and protect, churches. Our friendly team are ready to help you with any query, no matter how big or small, and are available by telephone, email or post.

**Call: 0345 777 3322**

(8am-6pm Monday to Friday except Bank Holidays)

**Email: [churches@ecclesiastical.com](mailto:churches@ecclesiastical.com)**

**Post: Church customer services, Beaufort House, Brunswick Road, Gloucester GL1 1JZ**





## Unique research bolsters our advice for churches on slips and trips

Although churches are generally low-risk environments, slips and trips remain the most common cause of injury. In some cases, these can be severe, so taking sensible and adequate precautions is essential. Sometimes, this is more difficult in church premises, usually because of design constraints or the heritage fabric of the building itself. Here, it is usually necessary to consider a wider range of precautions.

We understand this challenge, and it's why we have teamed up with leading health and safety researchers at the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL) to look at the problem. We have conducted research across a range of historic buildings (including churches) with a view to developing practical advice in the prevention of slips and trips. This is in a way that is both sympathetic with the history of the building and is cost effective.

Our new guidance looks at a range of topics identifying best practice and exploring a range of precautions. You can find out more and read the guidance on our website at: [www.ecclesiastical.com/churchslipsandtrips](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/churchslipsandtrips)

## Do we have up-to-date contact details for you?

If you need to update us on changes to names, email addresses, phone numbers and changes to PCC members, you can do this by calling our team on:

**0345 777 3322**



# We've donated over £285,000 to churches across the UK so far!

For every new home insurance policy taken out with us, we have donated £130 to the church of the policyholder's choice, and so far these donations add up to over £285,000!

We are delighted that this offer is now running until the end of 2019 and many more churches are set to benefit from our donations.

### How your church can benefit

For every new home insurance policy taken out where 'Trust130' is quoted, we will ask the customer what church they would like a donation of £130 to go to. So, by spreading the word around your church workers, volunteers and congregation, your church could benefit, and as there is no limit to the number of donations one church can receive; the donations could make a big difference to your church.

### Has your church already received a donation?

If your church has received a donation, we'd love to hear how your church has used the money. Whether you've used it



for a large project or event, or just to buy biscuits for coffee mornings, we want to hear about it. You can either tell us by email at: [Trust130@ecclesiastical.com](mailto:Trust130@ecclesiastical.com) or via facebook tagging us [@churchmatters](https://www.facebook.com/churchmatters) and we might share your story too!

Find out more about our home insurance at: [www.ecclesiastical.com/homeinsurance](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/homeinsurance)





## Rewarding the good work of others with our Movement for Good Awards

At Ecclesiastical, we've always believed in supporting the causes that can make a positive difference to people's lives. That's why we work closely with the communities we serve to tackle the issues that are important to them.

On Tuesday 23rd April, we launched our Movement for Good Awards – a programme designed to give £1 million to charities. Our Movement for Good Awards are a way of recognising and supporting the efforts of these dedicated men and women – people who devote their energies to changing people's lives for the better.

**500 charities will receive a £1,000 donation**

Anyone can get involved by simply nominating an eligible charity\*. You can nominate between Tuesday 23 April and Friday 17 May.

**10 charities will be awarded a £50,000 grant**

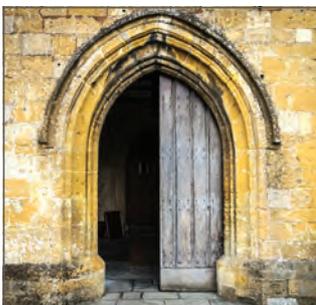
Eligible charities\* can apply for a grant via a simple online application. Applications open on Monday 23 June and close Friday 26 July.



So, if your church is a registered charity, you have a charity associated with your church, or there's a charity anyone in your congregation is associated with, you can get involved.

You can find out more on our website at: [www.ecclesiastical.com/movementforgood](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/movementforgood)

\*Please note, anyone can nominate but you must be an eligible charity to win an award. Go to the website address above to view the full Terms and Conditions.



## Taking a sabbatical in 2020?

Ecclesiastical's Ministry Bursary Awards provides financial support for members of the clergy taking extended study leave, and we are now accepting applications for sabbaticals taking place in 2020. You can find out more about the awards, check the eligibility criteria and apply on our website: [www.ecclesiastical.com/mba](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/mba)

## Risk Management Advice Line

We know that managing the risks of a church or church hall can be a demanding responsibility.

That's why we've introduced the Risk Management Advice Line. Whenever you need information about managing risk and can't find what you are looking for on our website, our experts are here to help.

Call our Risk Management Advice Line: **0345 600 7531**

The line is open from 9:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday excluding Bank Holidays.

Alternatively you can email us at: [risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com](mailto:risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com) and one of our experts will call you back within 24 hours.

Our Risk Management Advice Line offers Ecclesiastical customers free risk advice. Please have your policy number to hand when you call.

## Our new-look website

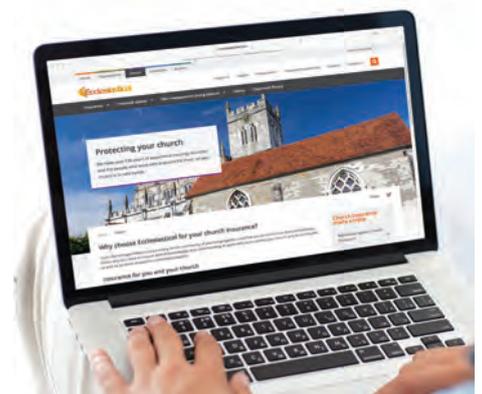
Have you seen our newly refreshed website? We've changed our site to make it easier to use, but you will still find all our useful guides, information and videos available on the site.

The website has a clean and fresh style, which makes it easier for you to find the information you need. If you have any trouble finding information on our new site you can always call our team who will be happy to direct you to the right place.

Call us on: **0345 777 3322**

[www.ecclesiastical.com/church](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/church)

We would like to hear what you think of our new website. You can email comments and feedback to: [churches@ecclesiastical.com](mailto:churches@ecclesiastical.com)



# Allchurches announces record giving and changes to grant programmes

In 2019, Allchurches Trust, owners of Ecclesiastical, is making changes to its giving that will place even more of an emphasis on helping organisations in less-affluent areas.



The changes have come about following a Strategic Grants Review, which set out to ensure that the Trust continues to meet the needs of its beneficiaries and make the greatest possible impact with the funds available. The aim is to improve effectiveness, transparency and reporting, including for annual grants to dioceses and cathedrals.

These annual grants are now guaranteed until 2022, facilitating longer-term, strategic planning. At the same time, the Trust aims

to steadily make a greater amount of funding available to churches, charities, dioceses and cathedrals that apply for grants to fund projects in their communities.

As well as giving a higher percentage of the total project cost, Allchurches has doubled the uplift on grants to projects in areas of greatest need.

Annual grants are also now allocated based on population and the degree of deprivation of the area, and dioceses and cathedrals have been asked to provide more information about what they intend to spend their grant on and report back on the impact that the money is having.

Chairman of Allchurches Trust, Sir Philip Mawer, said: "We've already heard about some great initiatives being funded by our annual grant, including a youth outreach partnership project called Growing Faith for Generations (GF4G) in the Isle of Man. We're keen to work with dioceses to share these stories about the good work our funding is helping to enable in their parishes."

You can find out more about Allchurches Trust at: [www.allchurches.co.uk](http://www.allchurches.co.uk)

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**NOW available to PCC members!**

### Car Insurance

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[www.ecclesiastical.com/claims](http://www.ecclesiastical.com/claims)

\*Ecclesiastical claims satisfaction survey 2017 - direct customers



### Funeral Plans

A funeral plan from Ecclesiastical is an ideal way to make financial provision for your funeral, as well as reducing the worry for your loved ones at a difficult time. Making your funeral wishes known in advance and providing for the cost makes sound financial sense.

**Call: 0800 055 6503**

[www.funeralplans.co.uk](http://www.funeralplans.co.uk)

# New Possibilities for Lay Ministry

Following consultation undertaken in the deaneries, the Diocese is about to embark on an exciting new venture, in offering the opportunity for people to train for a range of Authorised Ministries.

Authorised Ministries are designed to release and utilise the gifts that God has already given to his people. They further the mission of God, and enable and affirm the development of the ministry of the whole people of God. Many people want to offer their time and talents in particular ways, and this scheme offers them



a short but focussed Diocesan training course, to equip them for specific roles in their parishes, and potentially more widely. It will encourage local churches to respond to their particular needs in terms of mission and ministry.

During the consultation period, enthusiasm was expressed for a range of ministries. To ensure that our plans are deliverable and realistic, we will focus in the first instance on the following areas: worship leading; pastoral care; and community engagement. These will be followed by training modules in lay leadership; evangelism; children and youth ministry; pioneering; and more specialist pastoral ministry.

Participants will need to have the recommendation and backing of their incumbent and PCC; they will adhere to the diocesan safeguarding policies, attend diocesan training, be committed to ongoing

training and supervision following authorisation, and will exercise ministry within a collaborative team (although the size and shape of the team may vary at a local level).

The Authorised Ministry course will consist of two building blocks of training:  
1) a preliminary block which will include the relevant safeguarding training, together with a session on diocesan values and ministry in an Anglican framework; 2) the substantive module, which consists of a number of sessions – usually twelve evening sessions – covering both core material common to all Authorised Ministries (3 sessions) and specialist skills, knowledge, and experience (9 sessions) – designed to equip the participants with the necessary skills and confidence to begin ministering.

We have already run well-received pilots for training worship leaders in Norham and Bamburgh and Glendale deaneries, and we are excited about the opportunities this new scheme will give for more people to use their God-given potential in God's mission in and to the world.

For further information, please email [vision@newcastle.anglican.org](mailto:vision@newcastle.anglican.org) or call me on **0191 270 4143**.

## Ian Flintoff

Director of Discipleship and Ministry for Mission

## Great Vocations Conversation

'You did not choose me, but I chose you, and... appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.' John 15.16

Every Christian has a calling from God – and many callings have been prompted by a conversation with those who know us best. Last year, the Church launched the Great Vocations Conversation. It was a challenge to our clergy and leaders to see one another as God sees us – individual, exceptional and full of potential – and to commit to beginning a conversation about vocation with a different person every month. We're all aware that we need to foster and encourage more vocations to ordained ministry in the next few years as numbers of clergy nearing retirement mean we are facing a real shortage. For those who do come forward to test their vocation, almost all of them will have been prompted by an encouraging word from someone who knew them well. Someone like you!

You can find out more at [www.churchofengland.org/GreatVocationsConversation](http://www.churchofengland.org/GreatVocationsConversation). There are plenty of hints and suggestions about how to make your church a place where God's calling to each one of us is kept firmly on the agenda. Could you commit to talking to people about their skills and passions, to affirming them and encouraging them to



use their gifts for the glory of God and to contribute to the life of the church?

Could you contribute to some really important myth-busting to get the message out?

- Myth: Ministry means being an incumbent parish priest. *There are many licensed and ordained roles both in the church and beyond.*
- Myth: Ministry and motherhood don't mix. *It's just not true that women need to wait until their children have grown up. Life in ordained ministry can be more flexible than many jobs.*
- Myth: You need to have a degree to be ordained. *There are no formal academic selection requirements and support*

*is offered to those without previous academic experience.*

- Myth: You'll have to pay for your training. *We provide financial support to ordinands. Tuition fees are paid and family maintenance and travel allowances are available.*
- Myth: You'll have to give up your job. *Some people are called to leave employment and move to a new home for training and ministry. Others will train part-time alongside their job or other responsibilities. Whichever pathway is right, high quality training and preparation for ministry is assured.*

Making a commitment to talking about God's call needn't be difficult: it might be as simple as a chat in the queue for coffee about someone's passions and gifts; but it could take them deeper into questions of service, flourishing and witness. Why not join in the Great Vocations Conversation!

And if you'd like to know more about the next steps in helping someone to think about their vocations, do get in touch.



**The Rev'd Claire Robson**  
Diocesan Director of Ordinands

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**07741 849651**

# Prospects for Pilgrimage in the North East



Walkers on the Pilgrims' Way, Holy Island

There is renewed interest in notions of pilgrimage in the 21st century. This may be influenced in part by films like 'The Way' and TV programmes about pilgrim routes or monasteries, and their appeal to a more individualistic approach to spirituality.

St Cuthbert, carving by Tom Fiddes, at Old Hazelrigg on St Cuthbert's Way



Tourism experts point to wider trends towards 'slow tourism', mindfulness and self-discovery. Perhaps our Western world is not as secular as often assumed.

*Tourists or Pilgrims?* Actually these are difficult to distinguish, as there are wide-ranging beliefs and expectations – most pilgrim trail-walkers reflect a sense of transcendence, including people who are not regular worshippers. Pilgrimage is the original tourism – the idea of leaving home, taking time out – and for some, a chance to consider life direction, come to terms with loss, and so on. Those walking the Camino di Santiago still reflect such a range of motivations today.

Closer to home, St Cuthbert's Way was only created in the 1990s but has become one of the main Saints-themed routes that are walked in the UK, and by a very international set of walkers. St Oswald's Way soon followed. Now, recognising interest in the region's Christian heritage, the North East network of tourism and heritage organisations are considering plans for several new Saints-themed routes linking Durham, Hexham, Newcastle, Lindisfarne and other key locations.

People following a pilgrimage trail will not automatically visit churches en route, but any church that is on or near to a popular walking,

cycling or tourist route has the potential to attract and welcome visitors.

People visit churches and religious heritage sites in huge numbers. A National Churches Trust poll in 2018 found that 49% of British adults visited a church, chapel or meeting house last year. 24% said this was to attend a life event such as a wedding, funeral or baptism, 22% had visited for tourism and 11% for a mass or worship service.

Visits to churches generally take place as part of an outing involving other attractions and activities. Often unpremeditated, such visits may be prompted by a 'Church Open' sign or other invitation. Churches in rural areas or on trail routes can offer a sense of tranquillity and spiritual retreat that can contribute to the experience many visitors seek – consciously or not – whilst on holiday.

Newcastle Diocese's Tourism Task Group has been supporting tourism initiatives for churches for more than a decade, including steering various phases of the 'Spirit in Stone' project. With prospects for new trails and a return visit of the Lindisfarne Gospels to Durham in 2020, the Task Group feels that now is a good time to consider the scope for further action to attract and welcome visitors.

Here are some ideas individual churches could consider:

- Tell stories, and don't be shy about explaining the spiritual significance of churches as places of worship.
- Look for points of interest in and around your church and plan a prayer-trail leaflet offering some interpretation, reflections or gentle prayer-prompts.
- Consider the scope for collaborating with others on a local trail highlighting stories and places of visitor interest.

*For more ideas and advice, **Church Buildings for Everyone – A Visitor Welcome Toolkit** is a free resource to help volunteers in local churches to enhance their visitor welcome, plan new activities and produce new materials. It can be found online at this webpage: <http://inspirednortheast.org.uk/spirit-in-stone>*

**Andrew Duff**

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When it feels **irreplaceable**, trust



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