

 Diocese of Manchester

archdeacons' visitation news

Dear Churchwardens

Churchwardens are lynchpins and a gift. Without them we could not serve God in our parishes with such confidence.

However, because they're important, they should not be left alone to do everything. The Bible reminds us that teams matter and that none of us, whether lay or ordained, are called to serve Jesus alone.

Consider how Jesus sends out the first disciples in pairs. These demanding missions – in which people not so different from us were sent forth in service of the Gospel – were undertaken in fellowship and mutual support.

Yes, the circumstances facing Jesus's first followers were different to our own, but when we undertake shared ministry, we follow the pattern commended by the Lord. How do we inhabit this pattern? I think the answer lies, in part, in deep prayerful attention to God and one another. God calls us to look out for one another.

This vocation to look out for one another is both about pastoral care as well as a prayerful working together to spot and develop individual gifts so that we share the workload.

When we attend to one another, prayerfully, I believe we are drawn deeper into the life God wants for us. I don't underestimate the challenge of caring for huge buildings or addressing rising costs. Equally, I don't want us to forget the goodness of shared ministry grounded in mutual prayer and support.

As St Paul reminds us, 'We are to bear each other's burdens, so that there is more than one shoulder under the weight of life.' That's our challenge for this year: to be the kind of congregations, parishes, mission communities that support one another to share the load and step forward into God's mission.

This year, let's keep our eyes and hearts open to God's promptings. When we do this, wonderful things can happen. We all have a part to play in this. As we look to Jesus, he reveals the Way of Life, and we walk together.

St Paul also says, 'We are strengthened by one another and able to bear up under the weight of the suffering of this world.' These are challenging times, but I still believe that God provides all we need, and more, for his Kingdom to break into this weary world. In our shared ministry, we know the grace of God.

Venerable Dr Rachel Mann

Archdeacon of Salford and Bolton



**The Venerable
Dr Rachel Mann**
Archdeacon of Salford
and Bolton



The Venerable Karen Best
Archdeacon of Manchester
and Acting Archdeacon of
Rochdale



In Vacancy
Archdeacon of Rochdale





Running a Giving Campaign

Generosity and a deep appreciation for all God has given to us are at the heart of our faith. We serve a generous God who gave His only Son so that we might have life in all its fullness. He longs for us to share this generosity with others.

Often, we are hesitant to ask for financial donations and are not always clear about the needs of our parishes. We know that people want to help, but don't always understand the impact they can make by giving generously to their church.

A recent Anglican Giving Survey highlighted two important findings:

- almost half of those surveyed would give more if they understood the impact of their giving
- most people would increase their church giving to help their local community.

We should not shy away from asking our church members to review their giving or consider moving to regular donations. Nor should we assume that people will respond without prompting; we have to ask, explaining the need for their support and the vision to which they are contributing.

Why not send a letter to the members of your congregation and consider producing a brief leaflet to give out to those attending?

The Giving Survey also found that less than one-third of Anglicans say they are regularly thanked for their giving. An annual thank you letter is a fantastic opportunity to show appreciation for the generosity of your community, share how their donations have helped in the mission of your church, and encourage them to review their giving for the year ahead.

Our website contains everything you need to run a simple giving campaign, including template letters and leaflets. Head to:

www.manchester.anglican.org/giving-campaign

Parish Share

Our parishes' finances are closely linked with those of the diocese and the national Church. It is thanks to the generosity of individuals and our parishes that we have been able to continue our work together across the Diocese of Manchester – reaching out to new people, developing our spiritual lives and serving our local communities. We want to thank you for your financial giving to your church and the wider diocese.



Our parishes contribute to the work of the diocese by giving Parish Share. Over 50p in every pound we spend together as a diocese comes from money generously given in churches each week and passed on to the diocese through Parish Share. We don't get any money from the

Government, although we do get money from the national Church to help support parishes in the most deprived areas in our diocese.

Parish Share helps cover the costs of the clergy in our diocese – their stipend and housing costs as well as National Insurance and pension contributions.

Over the last few years, many of our parishes have been struggling to give Parish Share in full. This leaves a hole in the diocese's budget every year that we cannot keep filling by spending reserves.

We have already had to reduce the number of clergy in our diocese and we don't want to have to reduce this further. Unless our parishes give the full amount of Parish Share, we will have no choice. This is why we are asking every parish to look again at the amount of Parish Share they are giving.

If you find that your parish cannot pay your Parish Share, please contact your Area Dean and Archdeacon who will then discuss your parish situation with you and tell you where to find further support.

For more information, head to:

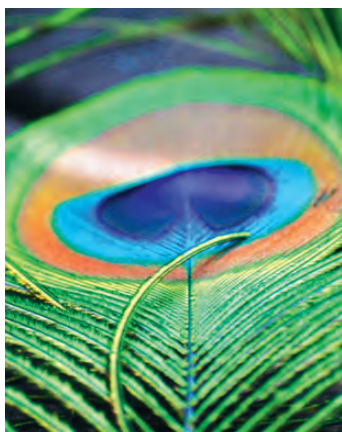
www.manchester.anglican.org/parish-share

Carolyn McGloughlin, Parish Support Officer, is also here to help.

carolynmcgloughlin@manchester.anglican.org



The Theology of Art



God is an artist. He delights in all that is made and each creation tells us something of his glory. Art moves us beyond practicality. Art is both beautiful and meets us in our minds and bodies – sometimes for healing.

In the moments when we create or enjoy, our entire soul is fed and nourished, sustaining us for the journey ahead.

“God could have easily spoken a monochrome cosmos into being. He could have made an all-grey universe – grey planets, grey animals, grey-on-grey rainbows in a grey sky. Even oranges would be called ‘greys’. This Greytopia could’ve been perfectly efficient and functional from an engineering perspective. Why, then, make our multi-hued universe? Why the colour spectrum? Why red strawberries, orange oranges, and yellow lemons? Why mandarin fish, peacocks, and chameleons? Because, as Genesis repeats seven times, ‘God saw that it was good.’ Evidently, God cares about more than efficiency and functionality. He also cares about beauty.”

Thaddeus Williams

Christ has no body now on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours... Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good, and yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now.

St Theresa of Avila 1515-82

Pentecost

Spirit of God
put love in my life.
Spirit of God
put joy in my life.
Spirit of God
put peace in my life.
Spirit of God
make me patient.
Spirit of God
make me kind.
Spirit of God

make me good.
Spirit of God
give me faithfulness.
Spirit of God
give me humility.
Spirit of God
give me self-control.

From Galatians 5:22-23

The Venerable Karen Best

Archdeacon of Manchester
and Acting Archdeacon of
Rochdale



It's a Lovely Ministry



Amit Chawan serves as Churchwarden and Reader at St James', Moss Side in Manchester, the parish he has attended for the last 15 years.

When he first moved to the area from Pune, India, Amit worked at MRI as a nurse

and began attending St James' as he had been invited by friends. Amit now works as a teacher to medical students, a job which he loves and which he carries out alongside his roles in church.

Amit says, “My job provides that joy of sharing the compassion of Jesus even though they might not remember me when they’ve gone home. Jesus also calls us to grow in him and answer his calling.”

For Amit, a significant part of answering this calling was to become a Reader in church. “Reader ministry appealed to me as it was a way to demonstrate that you don’t have to be ordained to serve the Lord.”

Then Amit became the Churchwarden. Knowing that this would mean being part of a team of officers, Amit accepted an invitation to take on the role.

As one of two Churchwardens at St James', he says “The first year was a bit of a learning curve but I love it since then. I’ve got a colleague Churchwarden and we’ve just grown together as a team, it’s a lovely ministry and sits very well with my Reader ministry too. It’s a double job but I love it.”

Amit feels like many people are on the journey to volunteering in their church without realising, through observing others doing the work and knowing that this is something they would enjoy doing too. He encourages others to take the first step by taking on a small role at first to give a little back to their church and lighten the load on Churchwardens.

“I learned from my experience if you’ve got a supportive team and trust that the Lord is calling you to look after his church and his family, then you should give it a try.”

Find out more about focal leaders

Every church benefits from having a person who acts as the focal point for mission and growth, working with the congregation and drawing in the wider community. Experience and research in other dioceses suggest that the presence of a focal leader in church life is linked with increased growth of all kinds.

Focal leaders are now active in parts of the diocese and have varied roles depending on the needs of their parish.

Alan Davey, Focal Leader at St Paul's, Rawtenstall:



"When the role of focal leadership was first discussed, it stood out to me as something that was absolutely needed. I've got a bit of a passion for lay involvement in the church."

Focal leadership can adapt to suit the needs of each church, and for Alan, there are two important aspects of focal leadership: to encourage people to participate in the church, and to

recognise when people are doing too much so he can look for ways to help lighten the load.

Alan draws people into the action of the church and encourages people to pursue what they are passionate about.

"I view my position as leading a team of good people with different skills who do things in church, and I help people to use their talents.

"If you have a good team around you who are hard-working and gifted, it's about giving them the confidence to find how they can help and encouraging them to give it a go. I just let them know that we're all in this together."

Robina Jones, Focal Leader at St George's, Unsworth:

"I am there for the congregation, acting as a person of welcome, someone they can ask for help and advice on anything related to the church."



For Robina, being a point of contact for the congregation comes naturally. She is used to being at the front through leading the all-age service, and people often approach her to ask about upcoming events or services. She is also a visible face of the church for both regular attendees and newcomers thanks to her role in welcoming and greeting people every Sunday.

Prayer also plays a huge role in Robina's focal leadership, having undertaken prayer courses so that she can pray alongside and for people within the congregation. "Prayer is very important for me... I want my congregation to know that I'm there for them with that as well."

Robina would encourage anyone involved in their church to consider taking on the focal leadership role, saying, "It doesn't cost me anything – I just give my time and basic knowledge, and if you want to help your church and congregation, it's a wonderful position to take!"

Find out more at:

 www.manchester.anglican.org/focal-leadership



For more information

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

Facebook: Ecclesiastical **X:** @churchmatters



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