

## Events and Training

### Year of Faith Bishop's Teaching Events

Saturday 11th May  
St Mary's Church, Ross-on-Wye  
Saturday 13th July  
St Michael and All Angels, Ledbury  
Saturday 5th October  
Bridgnorth Deanery (venue tbc)

### Year of Faith Bishop's Study Day 2

Thursday 24th October  
St Peter's, Hereford

For more information about all of the above, see our Year of Faith page on our website:

<https://www.hereford.anglican.org/our-faith/year-of-faith-2024/>

### Property Team Training Events

#### A general introduction to the Faculty system

Explaining the Faculty System, levels of consent, and using the online Faculty system

16th April 2.30-4.00pm

17th April 7.00-8.30pm

This training would be of interest to churchwardens, project team leaders, PCC members and incumbents.

### Intergenerational Mission Learning Community

15th April, 11am—1pm

For anyone in youth, family or intergenerational mission. Email Lizzie Hackney, Lead Intergenerational Mission Enabler:

[E.hackney@hereford.anglican.org](mailto:E.hackney@hereford.anglican.org)

### Rural Mission & Ministry Course

1st-2nd May, Yarnfield, Staffs  
2nd-3rd October, King's Park, Northants

An ecumenical course organised by the Methodist Church exploring what community, mission, evangelism & leadership can look like in rural contexts. Suitable for CMD.

Further information: [arthurrankcencentre.org.uk/ruralministrycourse/](http://arthurrankcencentre.org.uk/ruralministrycourse/)

#### A general introduction to church maintenance

Explaining who is responsible for maintaining the church building and why, the inspection of church buildings, and routine maintenance and resources

23rd April 2.30-4.00pm

24th April 7.00-8.30pm

This training would be of interest to churchwardens, PCC members and incumbents.

Booking on the Diocesan Calendar at  
<https://www.hereford.anglican.org/calendar/>



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## A God who communicates

By the Ven. Fiona Gibson,  
Archdeacon of Ludlow

April marks the 100th anniversary of the first broadcast by a monarch of the United Kingdom, when King George V opened the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in north London in April 2024. The speech lasts about six and a half minutes, and you can hear it in all its scratchily-recorded glory on YouTube.

I wonder if anyone then had any idea how much broadcasting would change in the coming century? We now take for granted the fact that we can see and hear almost anyone in public life at any time thanks to a 24-hour media. TikTok and Instagram have brought broadcasting within reach of any of us with a smartphone.

Communication seems to be hard-wired into us as human beings. That shouldn't surprise us, because our God is a God who communicates. Back in the earliest chapters of Genesis, it's the voice of God that brings creation into being. When Jesus is awoken by his terrified disciples in the middle of a storm, it's his words shouted into the tumult that calm the winds and the waves. When the Holy Spirit comes upon the

apostles at Pentecost, they speak the message of Christ crucified and risen in words their hearers can understand.

The story is told of a rabbi who could never get further in his reading of the Scriptures than Genesis 1:2, "And God said." The wonder of a God who speaks was too much for him to take in.

I wonder if that's why we love podcasts, audiobooks, and the radio so much, because it's as if someone were sitting next to us and chatting? As if we're listening in on a conversation that we're invited to be part of?

I wonder, too, if that's why words can wound us as well as heal us – because they go deep into the heart of our being?

The apostle James talked about the power of speech, how hard it is to tame the tongue, and how inconsistent we are when we say, "Praise God," in one breath and in the next run down another human being. Those are challenging words in an era where talk is easy, but we do well to take them to heart.

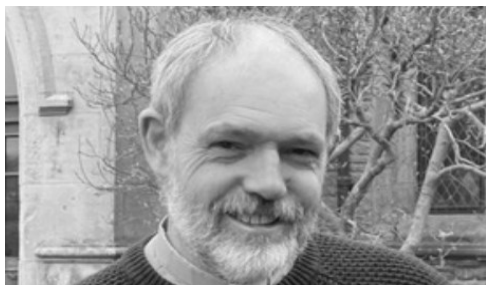
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[www.hereford.anglican.org](http://www.hereford.anglican.org)



## What's working in the Year of Faith?

Focusing on simple things that make a difference.



Last month, Rev'd Greg Smith, Rector of Pontesbury Benefice, pictured, in conjunction with St Thomas's Hanwood, hosted a Week of Accompanied Prayer and was heartened by the resulting blossoming of faith among the participants. Facilitated by four guides from Hereford Diocese, 12 parishioners from 5 different churches gathered over a week of one-to-one accompanied prayer sessions.

Rev'd Greg said, "Many of the dozen pilgrims who attended were nervous and unsure what to expect. As the week unfolded, we were enormously encouraged by all the gentle ways in which God met with us. The team was so kind, so encou-

raging and so gentle. Their availability and flexibility ensured the week ran very smoothly. I would encourage any church that wants to renew or develop its prayer life and faith to seriously consider hosting a Week of Accompanied Prayer."

Comments from participants included: "I felt God's presence all week, peaceful, calm, loved", "Big things happen that can rock us, but pausing to re-engage with God helps", and "My expectations were exceeded – a powerful experience".

The week ended with participants renewing their commitment to and enthusiasm for prayer and faith, equipped with new ways to pray.

For interested parishes or communities, the basic requirements are: a space that will accommodate three or four 1:1 confidential meetings at the same time; a catering team to provide evening meals for the team; and members who will offer bed & breakfast to three or four guides.

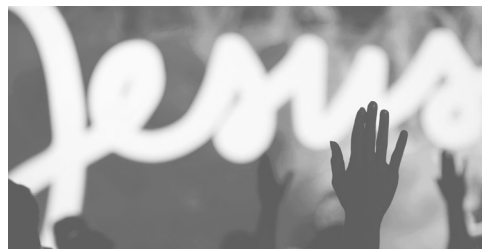
**Further information available from Pat Helm at [pat@thehelm.me.uk](mailto:pat@thehelm.me.uk).**

### A God who communicates, contd from p1

There are other times when we are slow to speak, perhaps out of anxiety or fear. One such time can be when we try to talk about our faith. In this, our Diocesan Year of Faith, we are all encouraged to have confidence that the story we have to share in our Christian faith is one people want to hear, and to become more comfortable talking about our faith.

We may never become those who broadcast to the world, as King George V did 100 years ago, but I wonder how we could learn to "broadcast" our faith in simple ways, and speak words of life to those who are longing to hear them?

## Diocese News



### Youth ministry awarded £500K

Hereford Diocese is delighted to confirm a £0.5 million award from the central Church of England to help fund a youth hubs pilot project

The diocese is aiming to establish at least 25 new worshipping communities for children and young people by 2030 as part of ambitious plans to grow younger and

more diverse, in line with the aims of the Church of England. Funding for the Youth Hub Pilot Project, focused around Leominster and Bishop's Castle, is the first step towards achieving this goal and will help to build an understanding of how young people come to faith in rural areas.

Lizzie Hackney, one of the pilot project leads and Lead Intergenerational Missioner for Hereford Diocese explains: "This is an exciting next step in our journey. It follows the success of our Intergenerational Mission project which concluded in 2022. Since then, we have felt the signs were clearly pointing us to focus on the spiritual needs of young people living in the diocese as part of our intergenerational ministry."

Full press release available on our website.

### Stories of Faith

#### Books for the Journey

### Books that have influenced our Faith Journeys

We invited people from around the diocese to send us their recommendations of books that have influenced their faith journey. Here are the first of the reviews. We'd love to hear yours too!

#### **DROPS LIKE STARS** by Rob Bell

**Lindsey Shute** says: "The book is amazing and has helped me both in my perception of life and my journey with God in all the kinds of suffering we face and creativity that comes out of that if you let it. It showed me that although I may suffer there is no way of going through life without any suffering and that God helps us through that suffering to create something new and fresh. Definitely worth a read."

#### **CUDDY** by Benjamin Myers

**Rev'd Matthew Stafford** says: "I simply adored reading Cuddy as I love anything to do with the Anglo Saxon Saints! The author made the book all the more relevant by relating the defining qualities in St Cuthbert into the here and now and what he might teach us about our journey of faith in our generation. I have recommended this book to many a seeker and fellow pilgrim on the journey."

Email your book recommendations to: [comms@hereford.anglican.org](mailto:comms@hereford.anglican.org)