

# Diocesan News

## October 2024

### Cut arms supply to Sudan and restore diplomatic presence, urges Bishop Nick



Arms supplies to Sudan must be severed and British diplomatic presence in the war torn country be restored, Bishop Nick told the House of Lords recently.

Violent conflict began in April 2023 when tensions between the Sudanese military and a rival paramilitary group, the Rapid Support Forces, erupted into warfare that has displaced millions of people.

During a House of Lords debate, the Rt Revd Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds: "The UK Government must, in my opinion, along with partners, leverage all its resources and political power to cut off the arms flow and create the conditions where any credible ceasefire might create the space for negotiation.

"Failure to address this catastrophe now will only lead to increasingly uncontrollable

consequences elsewhere, further destabilisation of an already fragile region – an example, oil gelling in the pipelines will diminish South Sudan's economy and add to economic and humanitarian challenges – mass irregular migration will be a consequence and so on.

"So I agree with the call for all diplomatic means and one to add is it's essential that the new head of office, the new special envoy must physically get into Sudan.

"We need physical, visible presence, even if it's only on a regular visit. Other ambassadors and envoys are doing this."

Bishop Nick, who visited our Link diocese of Sudan together with the Rt Revd Toby Howarth, Bishop of Bradford earlier this year has previously warned that a "humanitarian crisis has exploded" in Sudan and that a generation of children are being "starved, made homeless, given no medical care or education."

### Archdeacon Jonathan is moving to new flocks and pastures



The Ven Jonathan Gough is to retire from his role as Archdeacon of Richmond and Craven after five years of ministry in the Diocese of Leeds.

Archdeacon Jonathan will be leaving early in 2025 in a move aligned with his wife Revd Canon Dr Flora Winfield's recent appointment as the next Suffragan Bishop of Selby in the Diocese of York.

Speaking of his decision, Jonathan said: "It has been a huge privilege to serve as Archdeacon of Richmond and Craven since March 2019."

Wishing Archdeacon Jonathan all the best, the Rt Revd Nick Baines, Bishop of Leeds said: "We are very grateful for his service to the Ripon area and ministry in the diocese. We wish him and Flora the very best for the future – which promises to be bright and fulfilling."

# For God so loved the world, and so must we

## Bishop Anna

Remember those long summer days of June now already fading into a distant memory?

In the middle of that month, hundreds of local churches and people joined in with the annual Churches Count on Nature and Love your Burial Ground week, to celebrate and seek to protect the flora, fauna and wildlife found in our churchyards. The results are both sobering and joyous.

As well as noting 1460 different species, 50 less than the previous year, and what those were, such as mole, hedgehog, swollen-thighed beetle, oxeye daisy, herb robert and much, much more, a surprising 73% of those who registered for the initiative said inhabitants from outside the church community also joined in and took part.

When the church shows its care for creation, good stewardship and action against climate change, we witness to a God who made and loves all creatures. We also witness to a God who is relevant today with all the knocks and hurts this world and its people face, and can offer us a path of hope.

In the 5 marks of mission, 'safeguarding the integrity of creation' is at the bottom of the list. However in many ways it is integral to every other mark too.



When we care for creation we proclaim the good news of the Kingdom, gently evangelising about our creator God who sent his son to save us from our sin and who through his reconciling love invites us to join in with his redeeming work. Environmental action can also be a way in for new Christians who may already care passionately about the planet discover there are others in the church who do too, and bit by bit be nurtured in the relevance of the Christian faith more widely in their lives. Many today are also deeply anxious about our world, or affected personally by climate change such as the farmers on our doorstep whose livelihoods can be perilous as a result – so there are many near neighbours who need to know the pastoral care and release from worry Jesus can bring. Finally, the impact of climate change here and now on the poorest countries and communities cross our world is an urgent call to us all to strive for justice and peace.

Caring for God's earth, holds together our relationship with the Creator, creation and all God's creatures. If your church is yet to get involved, think about the nature count next year or starting your Eco Church journey which re-launches on the 8th October this year. For God so loved the world .... and so must we.

## New year starts for our Mission Apprentices and Interns

The diocese has been pleased to welcome new interns and Mission Apprentices to join the existing cohort, as they begin their time of learning and service.

Our Mission Apprentices and Interns are serving in churches across the diocese.

This year, the group are gathering on Mondays at Fountains Church Bradford to work through a packed training programme, supported by the Revds Leah Leighton, Derek Jones and Amy Berry.

The term began looking at the subject of justice, through the lens of the Book of Amos.

Other topics this term include sin, the climate crisis, caring for God's people, trauma, hospitality, how to read the Bible and more.

The Archdeacon of Bradford, the Ven Dr Andy Jolley, said: "I'm thrilled that we have such a good and diverse cohort of Mission Apprentices and Interns serving and learning in churches this year."



## Fountains Church Bradford share space and story with Bradford



Fountains Church Bradford have completed the final phase of their building project, and celebrated with an evening sharing their space and story with the city and district of Bradford.

Some 70 civic leaders, community representatives and other church leaders gathered in Fountains' newly completed upper auditorium on the evening of Thursday, September 26, where they heard of the vision of Fountains Church and the journey the team have been on to get to this point.

The Rt Revd Toby Howarth, the Bishop of Bradford, welcomed everyone to the event, and started by sharing how the journey of Fountains has begun, with prayer for a new church in the centre of the city, a prayer echoed by other churches and Bradford Cathedral.

Bishop Toby said: "I think of Bradford City Park as a smile, and it's so good to have fixed this 'broken tooth' in that smile.

"This journey has demanded an amazing amount of work, resilience, generosity and love, and I'm incredibly grateful to all who have made it happen, including people from all over the city and district and the Church Commissioners.

"Our vision is to be a blessing to Bradford, showing, as we do from all our churches, the love of Jesus, and service to our communities."

After a short video sharing more of Fountains' journey, Bishop Toby joined with the Ven Dr Andy Jolley, Archdeacon of Bradford, and the Revd Linda Maslen, Vicar of Fountains, in a discussion of the project.

Revd Linda said: "I have found joy in thinking about what it means to worship God in Bradford, with its beautiful diversity.

"Our challenge has been working out how to reach out, meet and connect with all the different groups of people that make up our city and district.

"This building was used for so much darkness, so it is so encouraging that we can do this work to renew, restore and redeem it.

"Particularly during these challenging times, we want to work with everyone to offer support to all communities."

Archdeacon Andy said: "God has done way more in the last five years than I could have imagined, and I'm excited for the next five years, and what dreams might be fulfilled."



## Bishop of Mara visits to recommit our link with Tanzania



The diocese was pleased to welcome recently the Rt Revd George Okoth, Bishop of Mara in Tanzania, and his wife Janet for a visit to explore and solidify our links with the region.

They arrived on Tuesday, September 24, and in the afternoon visited Christ Church Academy, Huddersfield.

On Wednesday, September 25, Bishop George and Janet visited St Stephen's West Bowling and their Shine Community Project, as well as Halifax Minster, where Bishop George presided at communion and shared a presentation about Mara.

In the evening there was a special service at Wakefield Cathedral to mark the links of our diocese with the Diocese of Mara.

On Friday, September 27, Bishop George and Janet went to St John's Rastrick for an event organised by the Mothers' Union.

The Ven Cat Thatcher, Archdeacon of Pontefract, said: "It was a great joy to welcome Bishop George and Janet to the diocese." III

## Faith in the Park

Derek Twine CBE  
Chair of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” The Yorkshire Dales National Park is akin to Eden: wild animals and livestock, seeds and plant, trees and meadows, hills and streams. Generations before us have worked it: farmers, miners, weavers and more. It is a beautiful God-given landscape blessed with an amazing heritage and wonderful people.

Yet we face a worsening climate and wildlife crisis, dramatic degradation and loss of flora and fauna, and pollution of our water. And among our Dales communities we experience negative impacts from inequalities in transport, housing, education, access to communication and opportunities for young people. This is our challenging agenda.

As I became Chair of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, it's was a moment to accept and honour the commission that “God took the man ... to take care of it”.

Our two statutory purposes as a National Park are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, and to promote



opportunities for the public understanding of the Park's special qualities. The first of these is, in effect, to fulfil Genesis 1:15; the second is a commission for mission.

We look to treat all people with respect, whether they be residents or visitors, or in addressing how we deal with the impacts of tourism and leisure, whilst ensuring open access for all; or when reaching out to engage all communities. For a person of faith, all these things are shaped by that faith.

At an emotional level, being out in the Dales gives a sense of awe, both at the landscape and the heritage. It's wonderful to share that with people of different faiths, coming together in a place where we can walk and feel closer to our common creation. In the same way that experiencing the outdoors is recognised for its physical and mental health benefits, it's beneficial for our spiritual awareness and growth.

We have much to do to address the serious challenges of our time, but we do so with prayer, hope and faith.

## Launch of civic and church performance space is great success



A five hour music event to celebrate a new outdoor performance space beside Huddersfield Parish Church was a great hit.

Ever-popular Huddersfield rock band Storm headlined at the new St Peter's Performance Space in an evening that also featured musicians from Huddersfield Philharmonic Orchestra, Hade Ede Brass Band, and youngsters from Huddersfield's Stagecoach.

Pupils from Spring Grove Junior, Infant and Nursery School performed, as did jazzy funksters Fifth Wheel Collective, folk band Hokum and Huddersfield blues, drum and bass legend Pat Fulgoni.

The St Peter's space was officially opened by Barry Sheerman, who was Huddersfield MP for 45 years.

Vicar of Huddersfield, the Revd Canon Rachel Firth was joined by Bishop Smitha Prasadam, and Revd Rachel said it was “a very special event in the life of St Peter's.”