

# People on the Move

Comings and Goings in the Diocese of York



**The Revd Lucy Brencher**, Assistant Curate of Acaster Malbis and of Appleton Roebuch with Acaster Selby, has been appointed as Priest-in-Charge of Acaster Malbis and of Appleton Roebuck with Acaster Selby, and as Assistant Curate of the Benefice of Askham Bryan, Bolton Percy w Colton, and Copmanthorpe; she will be known locally as Pioneer Minister of the ABC Parishes. These are interim appointments for a period of three years. She will be licensed by the Bishop of Selby at All Saints', Bolton Percy at 7.30pm on Wednesday, 23 November 2022.

**The Revd Canon David Casswell**, who holds the Archbishop's Permission to Officiate, has been appointed as part-time Priest-in-Charge Benefice of York St Hilda.

**The Revd Mandy Coufts**, formerly Canon for Mission and Pastoral Development at Bradford Cathedral, was appointed as the Start of Ordained Ministries Adviser with effect from 19 September 2022.

**The Ven John Day**, former Interim Archdeacon of York, was appointed as the Growing Healthy Churches Adviser for the Diocese of York with effect from 1 October 2022.

The Archbishop has re-appointed **the Revd Michael Gobbett**, Team Rector of Whitby with Ruswarp, as Area Dean of Whitby for a period of five years.

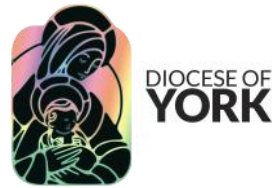
The Bishop of Hull has appointed **the Revd Richard Hare**, Vicar of Emmanuel, Bridlington, and Barmston with Fraisthorpe, additionally as Area Dean of Bridlington for five years with effect from 21 November 2022, in succession to the **Revd Matthew Pollard** who held the post until taking up a new appointment in the Diocese of Leeds in September 2022.

**The Revd Shirley Hebden**, Distinctive Deacon of Beeford with Frodingham, and Foston, and Brandesburton and Leven has been reappointed for a period of two years. Her appointment as Area Dean of North Holderness will continue, and she will be Licensed by the Bishop of Hull at 11.00am on Thursday, 5 January 2023 in Hullen House.

**The Revd Lyn Kenny**, Team Vicar in the Howden Team Ministry, will retire with effect from 23 January 2023. Her final service will be on Sunday, 22 January 2023 in St Peter's, Laxton.

**The Revd Sue Richardson**, Vicar of Middlesbrough, St Oswald and St Chad, will retire on the 31st December 2022.

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# TheNews

DECEMBER 2022

## A Reading from the Book of Stephen!

**Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell's book, The Sleepy Shepherd, is an enchanting Christmas tale for children aged 5-7 that tells the story of Silas, who as a boy is so dozy that he completely misses the visit of the angels and the chance to greet the Christ-child in Bethlehem.**



But one crucial night, years later, he makes an important decision – to be a real shepherd to a man whose friends have all fallen asleep.

**Archbishop Stephen will be at York Minster from 10.30am to midday on Saturday 17 December, to give a reading from his children's book, The Sleepy Shepherd. This is a free non-ticketed event and all are welcome.**

- Signed copies of The Sleepy Shepherd will be available at York Minster Shop at £7.99.

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*...and there's more!*

# To the Saints of the Diocese of York

The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, writes:

## My dear sisters and brothers,

The much loved carol 'In the Bleak Midwinter' by Christina Rossetti was originally written as a poem called 'A Christmas Carol'. She penned this as a reminder of the joy of knowing Christ, a reminder of the radical grace of God. A reminder that in the midst of the cold, dark winter, the hope of the Christmas story, the joy of the Christ child, breaks through into our midst.

This year, more than ever perhaps, we are confronted by the bleakness of winter. It is not only the starkness of the winter landscape (after all, fairy lights still twinkle merrily) but the bleakness of two years of crisis upon crisis. Global pandemic, political turmoil, war, cost of living crisis, hungry children, starving nations, barren earth – these are all bleak and mean that many people will be contemplating the Christmas holidays with dread.

And yet, even as we think about the reality of our world and how our actions and decision affect one another, we remember that we are God's people, that this is God's earth, and God promised that the darkness will not overcome the light.

So now more than ever we need to

preach the Good News the Christmas story ushers in. We need to remember who we are and whose we are – God's children, beloved of God. And no crisis can change that. The world may be an uncertain place, it may be bleak, but God is certain and unailing.

And so we will do what we always do – we will host Christingle services; we will sing carols; we will eat mince pies and drink mulled wine; and eventually, on Christmas Day, we will wish one another 'Merry Christmas', not because the world is perfect and without problems, but because we believe that Emmanuel, God with us, calls us to live the hope of the Gospel and tell of God's grace for all people. May this grace dwell in our hearts this Christmas. May we live out this grace in all our actions. May we preach Good News in the bleakness. May our lights shine for Christ in the darkness.

I wish you all a merry Christmas and a blessed 2023.



+ **Stephen Ebor:**

# Director for Strategic Transformation

**Sam Nicol took up her post as Director for Strategic Transformation in Diocese of York on the 12th November.**

As Director for Strategic Transformation Sam will take forward the work done so far in developing the vision of 'Living Christ's Story', working collaboratively to ensure that the consequent transformation programme is set up for success and delivers its strategic goals.

Sam previously worked for the NHS for over 20 years leading large scale changes to improve and integrate health, social care and voluntary services across Cheshire and Lancashire and South Cumbria.

In recent years she has developed and delivered training on leadership and management and provided change management consultancy to statutory and voluntary organisations.

"I am excited to be joining York Diocese in this season of transformation," said Sam.

"I am looking forward to collaborating with people across the Diocese on Living Christ's Story and sharing in the impact and benefits this will bring."

Sam is training for ordination in 2024 and joins York Diocese from the Church of England's National Safeguarding Team where she was the Senior Project Manager for the Second Past Cases Review (PCR2).

Outside of work and study Sam enjoys time with her nieces and nephews, watching detective series and walking her chocolate labradoodle, Coco.



## People on the Move ~ continued from pg 8

**The Revd Fiona Robinson**, Anglican Chaplain at HM Prison Hull and Associate Minister of Sutton Park St Andrew and Wawne St Peter, has resigned from HM Prison Hull with effect from the 30th November, and has been appointed as Chaplain to Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust with effect from the 1st December 2022. She will be licensed by the Bishop of Hull at Hullen House on Thursday, 22 December 2022.

**The Revd Francis Scott**, Vicar of Swanland, will resign with effect from 20 November 2022.

**The Revd Claire Todd**, Vicar of Brookfield, and of Stainton with Hemlington and Hilton, has resigned with effect from Tuesday, 3rd January 2022 to be Rector of The Annunciation, Paarl, in the Diocese of Saldanha Bay, Southern Africa. Her final service will be on Sunday 1st January 2023.

**The Revd Chris Wingfield**, Rector of Harton, will retire with effect from Sunday, 30 April 2023.

# Goths and Cake!

## Highlights from Whitby Goth Weekend

**Fr Paul Burnett, Assistant Curate in Whitby, writes:**

**As a local lad, I have seen the Whitby Goth weekend go from a small gathering once a year to a festival attended by thousands.**

Bringing a multitude of different genres and cultures, trying to send out the gospel message and offer outreach can be tricky to get right. As the latest weekend approached, it was great to get an email from a fellow St Hild student, Lizzie Reynolds, asking if she could organise some mission and engagement with the Goths centred around St Mary's Church. Never one to turn down a bit of outreach I arranged a meeting, and we were soon coming up with ideas to make everyone welcome.

After a few tweaks under the watchful eye of the Rector, Fr Michael Gobbett, both myself and my fellow curate Fr Will Ellis were tasked with conducting services on Friday (compline by candlelight) and a Saturday Eucharist based on the Book of Common Prayer but with

some modern musical influences from that culture.

On Friday there was a mini tour of the atmospheric churchyard with Martin Davies conducting a brilliant tour with tales of old Whitby characters.

Of course, it wouldn't be an Anglican initiative without tea and cake, which was generously supplied by the parishioners, organisers, and St Mary's staff on Saturday where many prayers and conversations were had.

The hope is that this will be something we can build on as a parish and offer again next year. The feedback from those attending was really positive and gratefully received. It was great to put our Church and faith at the centre of the festival.



**For Christmas 2022 the Church of England is returning to the the theme 'Follow the Star' which proved popular in 2018 and 2019, now with a tag 'The Great Invitation'.**

National advertising and promotion of the theme, its message and meaning are supported by a range of free or low-cost resources for parishes to join in and take advantage of the nationwide campaign to attract attention to their local celebrations and outreach.

The new resources for 2022 will work alongside material from previous years and will focus on The Great Invitation, encouraging everyone to share the joy of gathering together to celebrate with their family, friends and neighbours the birth of Jesus - especially after two years where this has been impossible for many.

### The campaign includes:

- Reflections – 12 Advent reflections to share on the theme of 'invitation'
- Christmas in a Box – a small number of model services that you can take and make your own
- National online services – services broadcast to share on Advent Sundays and at Christmas
- Printed materials – a reflections booklet and a range of other printed materials

### How can your church join in?

- Visit the Church of England's website for details on the national branding, reflections and more.
- Read the C of E 'Summary pack 2021', which includes helpful info on 2022 starting from page 11.
- Log in to the Resources Hub of AChurchNearYou.com for logos and other branding resources.
- Make a note to add your 'in person' and online Advent and Christmas services on AChurchNearYou.com, using an Advent or Christmas tag. There will also be 'Great Invitation' features on the site to help you invite people to your church services more easily.

**Churches might like to note that the football World Cup Final takes place on the Sunday before Christmas, the 18th December, in case this might affect your service plans!**



# Five reasons why early years are so important

Diocesan Children and Youth Adviser, Carolyn Edwards, writes:

**The Early Years Conference in October at Manor School, York, was blessed with over 40 delegates from all over the diocese – some already running successful groups and others enthusiastic to answer the needs of young families in their area.**

The day was started by Bishop of Selby Dr John Thomson with a fun story about the Good Shepherd, and packed full of inspiring workshops focusing on supporting families.

We also gave people a taster of the new Diocese of York Big Bible Storybook Toddler Resource which is due to be launched in November.

**Keynote speaker Claire Dalpra** gave us five reasons why the work people do with early years is so important:

1. **A high percentage of practising Christians came to faith before the age of five.**

According to the Talking Jesus research report in 2022, 34% of Christians grew up in a Christian family, 19% of Christians came to faith through Sunday School, plus significant percentages that come to

faith through attending church schools or Christian associations in schools, toddler schools and youth groups. Nurturing and resourcing these channels mean that Christianity amongst adults can continue to thrive.

2. **Toddler groups are one of the best ways churches can reach young families.**

Benita Hewitt's 2016 research 'It's just the toddler group' summarises it this way: "Toddler groups are amongst the most exciting and significant starting places for mission for both adults and children. Toddler groups thrive because there are many people dedicated to providing a safe, caring and welcoming environment where parents, grandparents and other carers along with their infants and toddlers can begin to experience the Christian faith."

3. **Encountering God through the heart in the early years helps to lay a good foundation for faith.**

In her book *The Religious Potential*



of the Child, Sofia Cavalletti shows that if children encounter God for the first time at an older age when they are also learning about morality, there is a risk they will only see God as an unloving judge. The younger a child encounters God the more loving and open this relationship will be.

4. **Play is good for the soul.**

The here-and-now, flow and imagination of play are just three aspects of spirituality that enrich us all and that early years do really well. We have much to learn from their freedom and joy.

5. **Human spirituality is often expressed nonverbally and under fives are experts at this!**

If we give space for silence, image, symbol, play as well as storytelling then everyone including all the grown-ups present will grow in their knowledge and love of God.

If you are interested in starting or revitalising your toddler group, please get in touch with our **Diocesan Children and Youth Adviser, Carolyn Edwards**, at [carolyn.edwards@yorkdiocese.org](mailto:carolyn.edwards@yorkdiocese.org).

She would love to help you work through the possibilities and resource this vital ministry.

[www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/childrenyouth](http://www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/childrenyouth)