



archdeacons'

visitation news

Spring 2019 - issue 17

Journeying Together on the Rule of Life

It is a great joy each year to gather as Churchwardens, Clergy, Sidespersons, PCC members, and others who support our church life. The annual visitation services are a legal formality and a chance to celebrate together.

Last year Bishop Paul launched the Rule of Life to help us be better followers of Jesus. It is an answer to the simple question, what do disciples do? And if we could all be encouraged to do these things, would we be better disciples?

At this stage some people will still be saying, what Rule of Life? Others might complain they have heard too much about it. The question is are we all doing it? The idea is simple concerning an inner journey of **Pray, Read Learn** – combined with an outer journey of **Tell, Serve and Give**.

As I visit churches I get the impression that in some churches perhaps relatively few will be following all aspects of the Rule of Life. I hope that the visitations will help us all feel encouraged and challenged by this to help us build a bigger church making a bigger difference.

Do we have a regular pattern of daily **prayer** and bible **reading**? I try and say the daily morning and evening prayer 6 days a week and find this structure really helpful to me.

Learn is asking about being part of a course or small group in which our faith can develop. Churches with courses and groups are much more likely to grow. They will also be better at looking after each other.

Tell is about creating the culture and confidence in which explaining what the Christian faith means to us, becomes as natural as speaking with passion about our other interests.

Serving our community is a way in which people experience the love of the church through our act of service.

Giving generously has to be a key piece – and we have many generous givers of finance, time and talents – but this needs to be continually taught and understood.

The Rule of Life is not everything about the Christian faith, but if we all took it seriously, it would strengthen the life and effectiveness of our churches and increase the blessings in our communities.

So as we gather, we rejoice and give thanks for all the blessings that we have received and commit ourselves to being better disciples and with God's help entering into the Rule of Life, teaching and helping others to do the same.



From left to right: The Ven. Roger Preece – Archdeacon of St Helens and Warrington, The Ven. Pete Spiers – Archdeacon of Knowsley and Sefton, The Ven. Mike McGurk – Archdeacon of Liverpool and The Ven. Jennifer McKenzie – Archdeacon of Wigan and West Lancashire.



Rule of Life

About the Rule of Life

In our Visitation News we offer a brief guide to the six words of the Rule of Life and how you, and your sisters and brothers in Christ can be supported on your journey on the Rule of Life. On the next couple of pages we look at each of the six words – Pray, Read, Learn: Tell, Serve, Give – to help you understand what they are about and how they apply to your life. And you can find more resources to help you as a disciple of Christ online at www.ruleoflife.org.uk

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Called to Pray – the starting point for the Rule of Life

When he launched the Rule of Life, Bishop Paul was keen to keep it simple for all to be involved in. Prayer is simple but some people can find the idea of prayer daunting. Yet we have a great resource to help us in the words of the prayer that Jesus taught us, the Lord's Prayer. Most people have a version of the Lord's Prayer committed to memory. It gives us a rhythm and pattern for all our prayer. It frames a time of prayer with God.

So the simple call to prayer is to pray the Lord's Prayer every day. If you do that already then great. But when you do, pray it as part of the worldwide communion of Christians who daily lift their hearts to God. Simply start your prayer by saying "together with all disciples in the Diocese of Liverpool and across the world, as our saviour taught us so I pray Our Father..."

Join in with Bishop Paul praying and find other resources to help you follow the call to pray at www.ruleoflife.org.uk And if you are sorted with your prayer life then who can you call and encourage in prayer?

Called to Read – getting into a regular pattern of Bible reading

The second premise of the spiritual disciplines that the Rule of Life is founded on is reading. Specifically reading the Bible. It is clear that by engaging with the Bible texts we can start to understand what God wants from us in our lives. Through the Bible we gain comfort, challenge and inspiration.

The challenge to read comes in two forms. Firstly we are challenged to get in the habit of reading. You may already have a daily pattern of Bible reading. That's great. Carry on with your daily readings, your reading notes, your online pattern of reading. Whatever works for you? If you don't have a regular pattern of reading then try to start. You could start by reading the Gospel of Mark or you could find another pattern of Bible reading.

The other challenge is to join with others in Reading the book of Jonah over the summer. During this time we will be putting together challenges and encouragements for us to read that book across our diocese. It will be great to see you involved.

You can find plenty of guides, hints and resources to help you read the Bible at www.ruleoflife.org.uk Why not encourage others to read a book this year?



Called to Learn – we learn best when we are together



As leaders in the church you are in a strong position to help others to learn more. Learning is done best when we learn together. People look to the wisdom of the older generation to be a role model and framework for our faith. They look to the younger generation for their spirit and energy. We learn from the enthusiasm

of new Christians. We learn from the experience and depth of knowledge of those who have been on their faith journey for a while. So we need opportunities to learn.

Research carried out by the national church made it clear that if a church provided opportunities for people to learn then they grew in faith. The research also showed that churches grew in numbers when they provided these opportunities.

So as individuals we challenge you to find opportunities to learn and grow. As church leaders we encourage you to find or create opportunities for others to learn, grow and develop. How you do it is a choice for you, your clergy and your church community. That you do it is important for the growth of your church helping more people know Jesus.

You can find plenty of ways to learn at www.ruleoflife.org.uk

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



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

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.

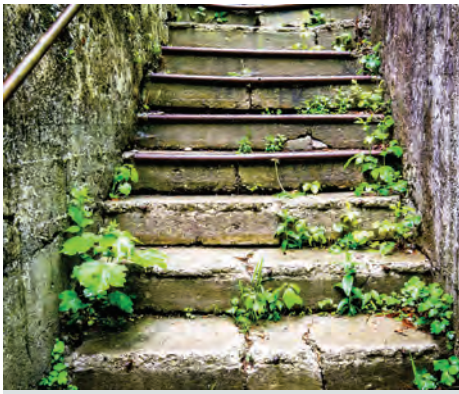
Call: 0345 777 3322

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

Email: churches@ecclesiastical.com

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

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 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





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

*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

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 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

We would like to hear what you think of our new website. You can email comments and feedback to: 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

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Expert Financial Advice

Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services provide independent financial advice. Our experts advise clergy, church people and PCCs on making investments (including ethical investing), pension and retirement planning, mortgages and life assurance.

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Email: getadvice@ecclesiastical.com



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*Ecclesiastical claims satisfaction survey 2017 - direct customers



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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

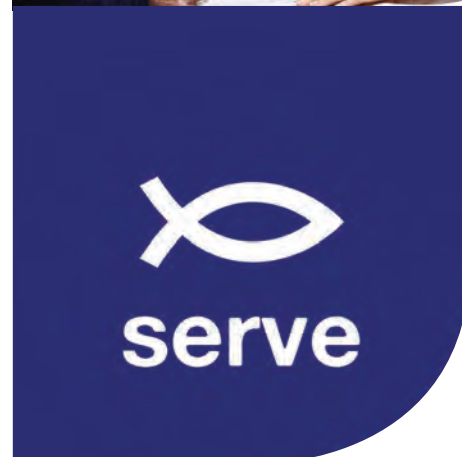
Sent to Tell – we need to share our story

Every day, we tell people about the things we are interested in. Whether it's sport, theatre, films, food, TV or music we will often share what we like and how it makes us feel. The same should be true of our faith but we are often timid about telling our story.

Being sent to tell on the rule of life challenges us around two areas. The first is to tell our story. We don't need to know theology or be an expert. We know our stories and how we feel God has worked in our lives. So we simply speak from our perspective. Others may have a different perspective. That's fine. We are witnesses telling our story.

The other challenge is to 'Bring a Friend'. If everyone who currently comes to church in our diocese simply brings one friend then we will add 60,000 new disciples. As church leaders you can encourage your church to be a place of invitation and welcome with all members bringing their friends. You can influence those around you – why not take the opportunity to tell your story and to bring your friends.

You can find plenty of guides, hints and resources to help you tell your story at www.ruleoflife.org.uk



Sent to Serve – we are here to make a bigger difference

One of the big ideas in the rule of life is that we do not do this for our own sake. We are here to make a bigger difference in the way that God has made a bigger difference for us. In so many ways on so many occasions the world has changed by people doing something to make a bigger difference. Famously our club is set up to benefit those who aren't members and church can be at its best when we are doing just that.

Last year we asked the Church Army to research social action and they told us the facts and stories of the array of projects around our diocese. You can read it at www.liverpool.anglican.org/BiggerDifference It supports our call for every individual to do ten things. Why ten and what things? Ten is just a convenient number that gives something to aim at. And what you do is up to you. One thing may be as a church becoming an Eco Church as part of our push to become an Eco Diocese (find out more on the back page). But you will get plenty of ideas and resources at www.ruleoflife.org.uk

Sent to Give – we are here to reflect God's generosity



We live in a culture which increasingly does not value generosity. A generous lifestyle is counter cultural in today's world. But we know a big challenge for every church is to pay for its mission, pay for its upkeep, pay for its parish share. That's a massive challenge. Some churches are stronger than others financially. Some may have

more affluent congregation members. But all face a financial and stewardship challenge.

The reminder that we, as individual Christians, are sent to give is a response to that challenge. But more importantly it's a response to the scriptural teachings that God is a generous God who calls us to give to the less prosperous amongst us. That's the concept of parishes paying parish share. So together we can fund mission and ministry in every community across our diocese. It's a challenge.

As is the challenge of paying for mission and ministry in individual parishes. That's why on the back page we talk about the Parish Giving Scheme. But the discipleship of giving is important. We are all sent to give. To give generously because we have received much.

Find out more about being sent to give at www.ruleoflife.org.uk

Helping us be good stewards

One of the big challenges we all face is that of giving. Stewardship is an important and necessary part of church life and was a topic that Jesus spoke about more than any other in his ministry. So we need to take this seriously.



There are two easy and practical tools to help you improve giving in your church. One is the Parish Giving Scheme, the other is contactless giving.

We have been very successful in our diocese in encouraging churches to take part in the Parish Giving Scheme so many are already seeing its benefits. The scheme is a simple direct debit scheme which reduces the amount of time Treasurers and Giving Officers need to devote to collecting money. A flexible system which, with permission, increases the level of giving every year so givers don't need to worry and churches get a more guaranteed level of income. Easy to manage, this scheme is proven to be the best, most reliable method for ensuring planned giving.

Contactless payment systems are everywhere. In every high street, on every market at every visitor attraction. They can now come to your church and are ideal for helping the one-off visitor, the christening guest or wedding couple to pay more easily. There are many different types of system being introduced to churches – including those that can be used instead of a collection plate.

You can find out more about how both of these systems can benefit your church at www.parishresources.org.uk where you will also find out more about how your church can encourage better giving and become better stewards of what God has given.

We make a commitment to be an Eco Diocese

At the beginning of the year we committed to become an Eco Diocese encouraging churches to become Eco Churches. An Eco Church is based on a self-assessment of how they are 'caring for God's earth in different areas of their life and work'.

To be an Eco Diocese we need a plan and a champion that will spur us to having a proportion of our churches rated Bronze, Silver and Gold as well as a rating for St James House. We will also need strong ethical and environmental policies.

So our lead will be Annie Merry and Faiths4Change, the flagship charity established by our diocese. Annie will work alongside Phil Leigh, our Diocesan Environmental Officer, to inspire, motivate and lead us towards being an Eco Diocese. Find out more on our website.



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