

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

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A selection of recent news and forthcoming events

Christmas is coming – get ready to share #GodWithUs

Following the success of last year's #joytotheworld national digital campaign on the run-up to Christmas this year's Christmas campaign for the Church of England is #GodWithUs and you and your church can take part in December, alongside the Diocesan social media channels and the national church channels as well. There will be loads to share online, plus printed resources to get hold of too. For more on the campaign [visit this page](#). Central to #GodWithUs is a new-look A Church Near You website ...

A Church Near You to relaunch

A new-look A Church Near You – our national church finder website – will point people to a Christmas service or event taking place in one of the 16,500 Church of England churches. All our churches should have a page on A Church Near You www.achurchnearyou.com. If you have a page it will simply transfer to the new site. There are also some exciting plans to further enhance A Church Near You in 2018 but the first phase of the relaunch is in November. Find out more about the changes to come in this [recently published blog](#).

New-look national Church of England website

Also in November get ready for a fresh new look for the national CofE website at www.churchofengland.org which will also link it across seamlessly to other sites such as A Church Near You and the Archbishops' websites. Part of the consultation process was a series of focus groups with clergy and laity from four Dioceses around the country, including our own Diocese. These groups met in January and over the summer. Keep an eye open for the changes coming soon.

Saying farewell

A few notable retirements have taken place recently, or are about to take place. Read reflection features on our Diocesan website on Rev. Canon [Timothy Lipscomb](#); Canon [Ian Stockton](#) and Bishop's Secretary [Sue Taylor](#).

Reformation 500

A wonderful ecumenical service for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation took place recently at Blackburn Cathedral attended by representatives of Christian denominations across Lancashire. The event was organised by Churches Together in Lancashire (CTiL). County Ecumenical Officer for CTiL, Rev Anton Muller, Vicar of Scorton and Barnacre and Calder Vale writes a short reflection on the event as part of the [coverage on the Diocesan website](#).

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HEALTHY CHURCHES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

Thank Your Vicar

Did you or your parish thank your vicar as part of the recent [Thank Your Vicar Week](#)? If so, it would be great to hear the stories about what you did – especially if you have pictures! Email communicate@blackburn.anglican.org

70 years for Adoption Matters is celebrated

Leading adoption agency, Adoption Matters, held a celebratory afternoon tea event at Whalley Abbey recently in the beautiful Ribble Valley recently to celebrate its 70th Anniversary. More than 70 people from across Lancashire attended the 40s-themed event including adopters, donors, local authority partners and representatives from the Diocese of Blackburn, including the Bishop of Blackburn, Rt Rev Julian Henderson and the Archdeacon of Lancaster, The Venerable Michael Everitt. The agency has its roots going back to 1947 with the Blackburn Diocese Adoption Agency and also Chester Diocesan Adoption Services. Those two agencies merged in 2007 forming Adoption Matters. [Read more and see pictures from the event.](#)

Witnessing through words and deeds

Do you want to think about how your church can be witnesses through words and deeds and help to transform its community? Organised by the Parish Mission Support Department and Together Lancashire, a series of evenings (7pm for 7.30pm start) are offering some advice about how you can get to know the needs of your local community as well as thinking about a rhythm of mission for your parish. Bring a group from your parish so that you can discuss together and return ready to put the suggestions into action. There are two more evenings still to take place. For more information and to book a place [visit this page](#).

Get Your Church Noticed success

A free communications and marketing advice day – ‘Get Your Church Noticed’ - for parishes across Lancashire took place in early October. Ronnie Semley, Diocesan Communications Manager, was joined by his colleague Neil Pugmire, the Communications Manager for Portsmouth Diocese and author of the book *‘100 Ways To Get Your Church Noticed’*, to lead the session. The event was attended by nearly 40 people and gave straightforward, practical ideas for church promotion. Subsequent feedback from delegates has been excellent. ‘Get Your Church Noticed’ is now an annual date in our calendar. If you missed the day, look out for next year’s event and visit the Resources section of www.blackburn.anglican.org for useful tips and advice in a dedicated ‘Get Your Church Noticed’ section.

... and finally ...

[Read the story](#) about the parish with a great way of ensuring their young people contributed to getting a new vicar in a story that has been featured across the local and regional media as well as Church Times!