



8<sup>th</sup> September 2025

To: All licensed and PTO clergy, LLMs, PCC secretaries, Vision Champions, Head teachers, DBF and DBE staff members

Dear Friends,

**‘All for Jesus’  
Celebrating 100 Years of the Diocese of Blackburn  
An Important Update**

2026 is our Centenary year as a Diocese. It will be a chance to give thanks for all that God has done through his people in the Diocese of Blackburn since William Temple founded it in 1926, and an opportunity to commit ourselves anew to mission and ministry in the service of Jesus Christ across Lancashire.

As you make plans in your own parish for next year, please do take good note of the following events and activities and share them as widely as possible.

**The Title**

‘All for Jesus’ is the branding for our Centenary year, explaining in three simple words why there is a Diocese of Blackburn and what our purpose is. This means that the Centenary will be an opportunity for people to come to know Jesus Christ either for the first time or more deeply than they do now, because personal relationship with him is what lies at the heart of every movement for renewal. Resources throughout the year, for example the Advent and Lent devotionals and the Lent Course, will have this aim.

**The Centenary Launch – January 4<sup>th</sup> 2026**

We will kick off our celebrations on **January 4<sup>th</sup>** the Feast of the Epiphany. As the Wise men lay their gifts before the Lord, they simultaneously reveal who Jesus is and offer their lives to him. That makes it the perfect day to launch our theme ‘All for Jesus.’

So that the centenary can be launched locally in every parish and school the following will be made available in the Autumn on the [Centenary section of the web page](#):

- Liturgical resources and a liturgy of commitment for those who will be celebrating the Eucharist on January 4<sup>th</sup> (the readings will of course be those for Epiphany)
- An Epiphany-themed all-age service that can be easily adapted for Sunday worship or for use with new congregations
- Resources for collective worship in our schools
- A short sermon from me. This can be played, circulated, plagiarised or ignored as you see fit!

### **The Big Day Out in Blackpool – Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

A celebration needs a party. So, on Saturday 16th May 2026 we are going to invite the Diocese to have a 'Big Day Out' together in the centre of Blackpool; a place that has played such an important role in the history of the Diocese. Let's make it the heart of our celebrations and also enjoy a great day together.

We'll be hosting activities for children of all ages with games, crafts and stories. We'll run sessions for teenagers and grown-ups from sport workshops to live music and more. In the afternoon, we'll have a giant picnic before all coming together for a celebration service on St John's Square outside the Winter Gardens.

Save the date, from 11am - 4pm, and look out for more information in due course.

### **The Diocesan Conference – July 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> 2026**

Book soon to be sure of your place at our Centenary Conference 'Found by Jesus' in which we will be exploring Luke-Acts. There are places for clergy and for one layperson from each PCC. Clergy and nominated laypeople can book using our Diocesan app 'Fruitful.' The venue is Liverpool Hope University and with great speakers, engaging worship and plenty of time to meet and chat, it promises to be an outstanding event.

### **Centenary Mission Weekends - September 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> 2026**

The Revd Steve Haskett and his team have visited many deaneries already, to invite every parish to out on a weekend of mission and outreach between 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> September 2026. The invitation is to host some simple events and invite those who wouldn't ordinarily come to church to share in fellowship, and also to hear something about Jesus and be invited to learn more.

To help prepare parishes further, a three session course will be available in early 2026 to inspire our people to confidently pray for, invite and share faith with those who aren't yet Christians. This will be accompanied by some simple tips on planning a mission weekend, with stories from lay people who have recently done this in their own parishes.

Finally, we will have three study days for our clergy and licensed lay ministers during April and May 2026. We are delighted to announce that the teaching will be led by Canon J. John, Rachel Gardner, and Bishop Lindsay Urwin respectively. They are all well known for their gifts in evangelistic speaking, and these days will help all our licensed preachers to sharpen their skills in this area ahead of the mission weekends.

You will be able to choose whichever you think might be most helpful to you. There will also be an additional day in June for our Authorised Lay Ministers.

Look out for more details in due course, and please do continue to pray and think about how your parishes can engage with this exciting opportunity.

**Centenary Service of Celebration –  
Thursday November 12<sup>th</sup> 2026, 7pm**

November 12<sup>th</sup> 1926 is the day the Diocese of Blackburn came into being. So 100 years later we will gather in Blackburn Cathedral with friends and guests from across the county to celebrate. Clergy and representatives from every parish and school will be invited along. So save the date and look out for more information next year.

**Launch of the New Strategic Vision –  
Saturday November 14<sup>th</sup> 2026, 9.30am-1pm**

We are in the midst of the process of discernment that will result in our new strategic vision once Vision 2026 expires next year. Therefore, on November 14<sup>th</sup> 2026 all will be invited to an open meeting of the Diocesan Synod when the new vision will be formally launched. The event will be live-streamed for those unable to attend in person.

**100 Faith Stories**

Blackburn Cathedral has its own schedule of events for 2026 and amongst them it is planning a wonderful exhibition and coffee table book celebrating 100 stories of faith from people around the Diocese.

Canon James Lawrence is, therefore, seeking out 100 different stories of faith from a diverse range of voices. He is looking to reflect the full breadth of Christian experience – dramatic conversions, lifelong churchgoers, moments of doubt and rediscovery, and everything in between.

If you have a story or know of someone who had, please email Canon Lawrence:  
[missioner@blackburncathedral.co.uk](mailto:missioner@blackburncathedral.co.uk)

**The Centenary Logo**

The long-serving Vision 2026 logo will be withdrawn at the end of the year.

The Centenary logo 'All for Jesus' is available [here](#). Please download and use it as much as you possibly can during the course of 2026. Stick it everywhere!

**Centenary Merchandise**

Look out for the classy Centenary merch coming your way later this year! Mugs, pens, tea-towels and who knows what else!

## **The Centenary Prayer**

Heavenly Father,  
in our Centenary year  
we rededicate ourselves and our Diocese to you.  
Send the Holy Spirit to give us  
confidence in our witness,  
generosity in our service,  
and love for our neighbours,  
that your Church may be renewed  
and many come home to you,  
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

Of course, whilst these centrally run events and activities will offer inspiration and times for celebration, what is best is always what is put on locally. Please encourage your people to use their imaginations and make their own plans for celebrating this special year in the way that is most appropriate for your own context. And it would be great if you could share what you are doing by emailing our Centenary Co-ordinator, Joy Rushton:  
[joy.rushton@blackburn.anglican.org](mailto:joy.rushton@blackburn.anglican.org)

This comes with my prayers for you and the people you serve.

Yours,

+ Philip Blackburn