Welcome to the next Bishop of Ripon
Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley returns from New Zealand

The Rt Revd Dr Helen-Ann Hartley has been announced as the suffragan Bishop of Ripon, succeeding Bishop James Bell who retired as area bishop last summer. Bishop Helen-Ann, who is 44, has been the Bishop of Waikato in New Zealand since 2014. At the time, she was the first woman priest ordained in the Church of England to become a bishop.

The announcement was made by Downing Street, and at the same time at the Diocesan Office, Church House, in Leeds by the Bishop of Leeds, Nick Baines. He said, “I am delighted to welcome Bishop Helen-Ann Hartley as the new Bishop of Ripon. She brings expertise as a theologian, and episcopal experience from the wider Anglican Communion. She will add great strengths to the leadership and ministry of this diocese.”

Bishop Helen-Ann Hartley was born in Edinburgh in 1973 and grew up in north-east England. She was ordained a priest in the Diocese of Oxford in 2006. After working in a group of 12 rural parishes in Oxfordshire she became Director of Biblical Studies at Ripon College Cuddesdon, near Oxford. With her husband Myles, a musician and church organist, she went to New Zealand in 2010 to undertake research at St John’s College, returning there in February 2011 to become Dean. In 2014 she became joint diocesan bishop of the Diocese of Waikato and Taranaki, unique in the Anglican Communion with two equal bishops sharing jurisdiction across the whole of the diocese. The New Zealand diocese, like the Diocese of Leeds, also has more than one cathedral.

“‘I am excited, delighted, surprised and deeply humbled by the call to take up the role of the Bishop of Ripon,” she said, as she visited a farm in Craven and a church school in Harrogate before meeting clergy and the media at Ripon Cathedral. “I look forward to getting my feet on the ground, listening and learning, and helping to root and grow the vision that Bishop Nick has for the Diocese of Leeds in the Ripon Episcopal Area.”

“I can’t wait to get to know the people and communities of the Ripon Area,” she added. “I hope that you will pray for me in this time of transition, as I will continue to hold the diocese and particularly the Ripon area in my prayers as we begin this new season together.”

Bishop Helen-Ann’s interests include the night sky, going to the gym and watching netball.

She begins her new role with a service of installation at Ripon Cathedral on February 4, 2018.
Team of 45 sent to encourage church growth

As part of a new ‘Resource Church’ initiative in the diocese, the Revd Mark Harlow, curate at St George’s Leeds, has been licensed as priest-in-charge of St Paul’s Ireland Wood in North Leeds. St George’s was recently designated as a Resource Church, a church which can ‘plant and revitalise churches, developing leaders and providing other resources for mission’.

Mark and his wife Kathryn (who will be Associate Priest, pictured with Mark and their children) are being joined by 45 members of St George’s, some of whom already live in Ireland Wood, who have committed to be part of the congregation.

The plant in Ireland Wood is seen as a pilot for the Leeds Episcopal Area and the rest of the diocese. Mark said, “I’m really excited to be joining the congregation at St Paul’s. I’m looking forward to loving and serving the areas around Ireland Wood and seeing a growing community shaped by Jesus.”

New births and old stories
Bishop Nick

Christmas is coming and the goose is getting worried. Advent not only offers time and space to prepare for the big event, but also to rehearse - re-live - the story of God’s coming among us as one of us.

For many people the story has become so familiar that the most extra-ordinary event in history becomes almost blandly boring. We Christians need to recover our sense of wonder and excitement as we celebrate afresh God surprising earth with heaven at Christmas.

Advent beckons us to learn to wait. Not to grasp at the instant gratification offered by a consumer world in which quick satisfaction or self-fulfilment are the discounted items on permanent sale. Waiting cannot be rushed. Yet, it creates a unique space in which we can learn to re-live the biblical story at walking pace, staying with creation, the prophets, the heralds of the Kingdom of God, the hope of redemption and a future coloured by more than death and destruction.

There’s another fresh start for us in the new year when Bishop Helen-Ann Hartley takes up her role as the new Bishop of Ripon, bringing her experience as a theological educator and as an experienced bishop from the wider Anglican Communion. We look forward immensely to the gifts she will bring to the life and mission of the Ripon Episcopal Area - and indeed to the whole of the Diocese of Leeds - as she helps people and parishes in the beautiful north of our patch to be surprised by the joy of the Incarnation.

I am hugely grateful for the inspiring, faithful and diligent ministry of the Archdeacon of Richmond & Craven who has steered the Episcopal Area through the months since Bishop James retired. I now look forward to the next phase of our common life and mission.

But, first, Advent. Then Christmas. Then the joy of knowing that God is for us - Immanuel.

+Nick
Bishop of Leeds
A flood damaged Calder Valley church has celebrated its reopening and renewal with a dedication service led by the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu. After the floods came a sprinkling of consecrated water as Dr Sentamu rededicated the parish church of St Michael in Mytholmroyd on November 5, and blessed the congregation. The church and parish hall were severely damaged during the Boxing Day floods in 2015, when the flood waters reached the top of pews. Dr Sentamu said, “I am always encouraged by the tremendous spirit, resolve, and generosity that is shown in communities affected by such hazards.”

Visitors to Wakefield Cathedral are to get better access to the crypt thanks to a £50,000 grant from WREN, a not-for-profit business. A lift is to be installed to take visitors with impaired mobility between the two floors. Since Project 2015 restored the Pearson crypt, access has been restricted to those able to use the stone staircase to the lower floor. Outgoing Dean, Jonathan Greener, said “I am excited by this latest addition to our Cathedral, It will provide us with much needed additional space for meetings, exhibitions and community groups.”

Regenerating Bradford and recapturing its ‘history of innovation’ was the theme of an evening at Bradford Cathedral last month led by Lord Andrew Mawson. Lord Mawson, who was born in Bradford, was the speaker at the second ‘Flourishing City’ seminar to be held at the cathedral. He spoke about his experiences of regeneration projects in London and looked at the potential of an emerging generation of entrepreneurs to transform the city once again.

Lord Mawson on making Bradford a ‘flourishing city’

Bolton Priory welcomes the world

A people counter, installed at the Priory Church, Bolton Abbey, shows that between September 2016 and August 2017 the Priory welcomed 162,000 worshippers and visitors. The figures make the Priory Church the most visited church or cathedral in the Diocese of Leeds. They also compare favourably with other Yorkshire visitor attractions, e.g. Whitby Abbey (151,810 in 2016) and Clifford’s Tower (146,703 in 2016).

The visitors come from all over the world. Nearly sixty countries and territories were represented, from every continent except Antarctica, with visitors from as far afield as Tibet, Thailand, and Trinidad & Tobago.

Archbishop of York visit

HUDDERSFIELD A flood damaged Calder Valley church has celebrated its reopening and renewal with a dedication service led by the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu. After the floods came a sprinkling of consecrated water as Dr Sentamu rededicated the parish church of St Michael in Mytholmroyd on November 5, and blessed the congregation. The church and parish hall were severely damaged during the Boxing Day floods in 2015, when the flood waters reached the top of pews. Dr Sentamu said, “I am always encouraged by the tremendous spirit, resolve, and generosity that is shown in communities affected by such hazards.”

Cathedral lift

WAKEFIELD Visitors to Wakefield Cathedral are to get better access to the crypt thanks to a £50,000 grant from WREN, a not-for-profit business. A lift is to be installed to take visitors with impaired mobility between the two floors. Since Project 2015 restored the Pearson crypt, access has been restricted to those able to use the stone staircase to the lower floor. Outgoing Dean, Jonathan Greener, said “I am excited by this latest addition to our Cathedral, It will provide us with much needed additional space for meetings, exhibitions and community groups.”

Bolton Priory welcomes the world
Ambitious plans for a lay conference of 1700 Christians from across the diocese have been unveiled to church leaders at the Diocese of Leeds Synod held last month at Ashville College in Harrogate.

The Lay Conference 2018 will be hosted at the prestigious Harrogate International Centre on Saturday 9 June, 2018, with high quality speakers being lined up to address the day. Each church in the diocese will be asked to nominate between two and five delegates to the conference, depending on the size of the church. Young people will also be represented with young delegates invited from each of the 25 deaneries of the Diocese of Leeds. Core costs of the conference will be covered by funding set aside for the launch of the new diocese.

In a debate on Lay Discipleship, the Revd Canon Andrew Norman, Diocesan Director of Ministry and Mission, said the Lay Conference would be a major event for the diocese. “We want all the parishes to send representatives to start the process of rolling this out so that we are starting to grow ‘confident Christians’ and ‘transform our communities’.”

The Lay Conference has been strongly supported by Bishop Nick who told Synod members, “This will be the first and best opportunity to bring people from across the diocese together to celebrate and learn together. I’m looking forward to an exciting and vibrant day”.

**Other Synod news**

The Lay Conference was one of a number of topics on the agenda of Synod. Communications, lay discipleship and a new title for the Bishop of Richmond were also debated.

Find a fuller report at www.leeds.anglican.org

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**Sri Lanka flood appeal**

An appeal for Sri Lanka has been launched in the diocese to try and help the Anglican Church of Ceylon in rebuilding homes and livelihoods for thousands of people still affected by the devastating floods of May and June 2017. The Diocese of Colombo, one of the overseas partner dioceses of the Diocese of Leeds, says the situation in parts of the south-west of the island is still difficult several months on.

“The Church continues to support many people recovering from the disaster. People have returned to their homes to find their houses either fully destroyed or partially damaged . . . there are basic human needs required for people who have lost nearly everything.”

The Sri Lanka appeal aims to raise £13,000 by the end of the year. If you can help, cheques should be made payable to ‘Leeds DBF’ with a note or written on the back of the cheque indicating it’s ‘For the Sri Lanka fund’.