New resource church initiative will start a ‘spiritual cascade’

An exciting church growth initiative in Leeds is part of a major funding bid to be considered by the Church Commissioners.

The new Diocesan Strategy aims to create five Resource Churches across the Leeds Episcopal area and the first is already up and running. Revd Mark Harlow has now moved to St Paul’s Ireland Wood, from his role as curate at St George’s, which was recently designated as a Resource Church.

Resource Churches are backed by the Church Commissioners as part of the nationwide Renewal & Reform programme and they “intentionally resource mission across a city, by planting and revitalising churches, developing leaders and providing other resources for mission”.

Committed teamwork is key to success and 45 members of St George’s have gone with Mark and his wife Kathryn (who has been appointed Associate Priest) to swell the St Paul’s congregation, where Sunday attendance was some 25 worshippers.

The plant in Ireland Wood is seen as a pilot for the Leeds Episcopal Area and the rest of the diocese.

Area Bishop for Leeds, Paul Slater chairs a working group to develop diocesan strategy and says this marks a “step change in terms of Anglican thinking”. He explained, “Resource Churches are about leading into growth and developing a pipeline of leaders.

“The idea is to create a spiritual cascade, so St Paul’s Ireland Wood will eventually become a Resource Church itself and develop leaders who can help revitalise another church.”

A Church Near You Training Day

The Digital Media Day for churches is on Thursday 15 February 10am-4pm, at York Place, Leeds. With the relaunched and revamped A Church Near You website, every parish church now has the opportunity to add much more information, pictures and links to this key resource.

To coincide with this, the London team who run it are coming to Leeds to lead a day looking at both A Church Near You and the latest trends for churches in social media, eg Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The day is for people with parish responsibility for digital media. It is free but please apply to john.carter@leeds.anglican.org
Halifax vicar reaches new heights

HUDDERSFIELD: Vicar of Halifax, Canon Hilary Barber, needed a head for heights in a week which included shadowing Red Watch from Halifax Fire Station as part of his mission to find out more about the lives of public sector workers.

“I’m hugely grateful to the men of Red Watch for allowing me to gatecrash their day,” said Hilary, “and for sharing with me an insight into their commitment and professionalism as firefighters in the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.”

The following day he and his new curate, the Revd Linda Maslen, abseiled down the tower at St Mark’s Siddal to raise money for Halifax Minster. They hope that efforts will raise £10,000 and can be sponsored at www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/linda-maslen

Happy New Year
Bishop Nick

2018 will be a year to remember.

That’s because every year is remembered for something, but we won’t know for a long time what will be memorable. What will happen this year that will change or shape the world for good or ill?

A century ago, an exhausted world celebrated the end of a world war, but it was unaware that decisions being made then would shape even worse events to come within two decades. The fruit of World War Two grew from seeds sown in the ‘peace’ agreements and treaties of 1918/19.

So, how might we approach the year ahead, wanting everybody to be happy in it whilst recognising that reality will ensure they won’t?

Why not try taking the Lord’s Prayer as our bedrock, praying it every day and judging ourselves by our faithfulness in being the answer to it?

This prayer begins by addressing ourselves to God who is both close (“our Father”) and remote (“in heaven”). God is not our best mate: intimacy is glued to awe, enabling worship to be about more than an experience of self-fulfilment.

God’s name - God’s character - is holy. So, the kingdom we then pray will come on earth as it is in heaven, is to be coloured by holiness - a transparent openness to the God who loves his creation to death and beyond. We pray that God’s will will be done, not the will of the powerful or the violent ... or even mine.

If we take God seriously, we must only seek our daily bread if we recognise that it is “ours”, not “mine”. We cannot eat while our neighbours go hungry.

If I am not prepared to forgive those who do me down, I cannot ask God to forgive me.

You get the idea. Whatever else 2018 might be remembered for, I hope it will be shaped by churches and lives lived according to this prayer of Jesus himself.

Happy new year.

+Nick
Bishop of Leeds
Bradford University makes space for faith

In a double celebration at Bradford University, both a new chaplain and a new chaplaincy space have been commissioned by the Bishop of Bradford. The Revd Andrew Howarth has joined the University’s Interfaith Chaplaincy team and will co-ordinate a team which includes Roman Catholic, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist colleagues.

Andrew (pictured second from the left) was commissioned by Bishop Toby Howarth (far left) in a short ceremony at the new Faith Centre in the University. Leading the event was Prof. Udy Archibong (third from left) Professor of Diversity and a Lay Canon at Bradford Cathedral. The Lord Mayor of Bradford, Councillor Abid Hussain (also pictured on the right) spoke about the importance of building peace and understanding.

Bradford University makes space for faith

Help needed for refugees

Two churches in Harehills who provide a vital service for asylum seekers and refugees are looking for people who can help provide English lessons. Twice a week, St Aidan’s & Trinity United in Harehills are transformed into a lively multicultural community where people from all over the world come to learn English and make friends. The Revd Diana Zanker, Chair of Trustees, says, “Over the last 11 years, we’ve grown from 4 learners to around 60+.” Diana is now looking for a Volunteer Fundraiser to work with existing support and a retired teacher to assist the Project Leader. Both roles are voluntary. Email diana@zanker.uk or 07882 558717.

Giving thanks for restoration

The former Archbishop of York, Dr David Hope, has taken part in a service of Thanksgiving for the restoration of a medieval Dales church which is now able to open its doors to visitors, pilgrims and tourists.

Grants totalling more than £100,000 together with generous giving from the local community mean that the 15th century church of St. Michael the Archangel, Kirkby Malham, in the centre of Malhamdale has been reroofed, replastered, and now boasts a new heating and lighting system, disabled toilets and amenities for the whole community. Some of the money is being spent on an improved website and information for visitors, which will include visitor trails, better signage to the church and a brochure for hotels, pubs and B&Bs in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

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Youth event

Young people from across the Wakefield Area have been spellbound by the latest touring production from Christian theatre company, Riding Lights. Sixty five youngsters came to St George’s Church, Lupset to watch Riding Lights’s latest touring show, Gospel Street, at the invitation of Bishop Tony Robinson. The special evening of theatre, comedy, spoken word and music was Bishop Tony’s second youth event as part of the Community of All Saints initiative. Bishop Tony has announced the next youth event will take place in Wakefield Cathedral in March.
One thousand new recipe booklets, written and produced by the Diocese of Leeds Mothers’ Union have been sent out to food banks to help people discover cost cutting ways to produce food on a budget.

Pictured with the book *Food on a Budget: Hints, Tips and Recipes for Tasty, Low Cost Meals* are MU members Elizabeth Johnson, Margaret Bentley and Elaine Swinhoe.

Recipes include such standbys as winter warmer soups, mushroom pasta, macaroni cheese, 5 minute bread and butter pudding and tasty rice salad, pictured right.

“For a number of years the Mothers’ Union has worked with students at Huddersfield University and distributed cookery books to help the young people away from home for the first time to prepare fresh, healthy food,” explained Mothers’ Union General Trustee, Yvonne Hutson.

“Following on from this, a Mothers’ Union member in the Leeds area of the diocese thought that Mothers’ Union could provide useful food hints, tips and recipes to help those with little cooking experience or those with very basic cooking facilities.

“This food hints, tips and recipe booklet grew from that idea and 1000 copies have already been distributed to food banks throughout the diocese.”

*Food on a Budget* also includes some essential cookery tips and money saving ideas for those who are unused to cooking for themselves. Tips include shopping as late as possible in the day to make the most of reduced prices on perishable foods, drinking plenty of milk and cooking for 3 or 4 people to make the meal even more economical.

To get hold of a copy contact the Mothers’ Union secretary for the diocese at musecretaryleeds@gmail.com or visit the webpages at www.leeds.anglican.org/mothers-union.