Urban worship is getting a huge boost with £3.9 million of national funds being invested in church projects in Leeds and Bradford city centres. A new-style church for city workers will soon open for business at Holy Trinity, Boar Lane, Leeds, thanks to an £800,000 Church of England grant. And a brand new church backed by £3.1 million is set to open in a former nightspot in Bradford’s City Park.

Holy Trinity Church, Boar Lane will offer special weekday services at times tailored to people’s busy lives. The project, which was proposed to Church Commissioners by the diocese, will be overseen by the Revd Canon Sam Corley, Rector of Leeds (pictured bottom left) who said: “This project will strive to ensure that the church thrives as a centre of worship and mission.”

The new Resource Church in Bradford’s City Park will embrace the whole community – especially the large resident student and business population.

Bishop of Bradford, the Rt Revd Toby Howarth (pictured top) said: “The new church will have a mandate to grow and send folk out to plant new churches and revitalise existing congregations around the area.”

Bishop Nick Baines added: “I am delighted the vision and hard work of clergy and lay people has been rewarded.”

Wakefield centre’s special birthday

A special week night service with a free evening meal for vulnerable people in the Wakefield area is celebrating its first anniversary.

St Catherine’s Church Centre has opened its doors for a service called Open Hands every Monday evening since January last year, since when attendance has almost trebled, said its vicar, Revd David Gerrard.

“We started with about 15 people and now we have some 40 people every week, which shows a huge need. The nature of the people that come means some are very regular, and others we see for a couple of weeks. Open Hands grew out of a desire to also meet the spiritual needs of people who use our food bank.”

St Catherine’s hosts Wakefield’s biggest food bank five days a week, as well as running projects to help the lonely, the isolated and those with mental health issues.
Let’s strive for balanced living this Lent

Bishop Paul Slater

At a recent Diocesan Environment Group Meeting, we got into bemoaning material consumption as a major contributor to carbon footprint. After a short while, one of our group stopped the drift of the discussion in its tracks by bringing us back to the nature of Christian faith as incarnational.

We believe in God who became entwined with flesh. In Jesus, we see God taking on the material with all its pitfalls and living hopefully and gracefully.

As someone once said: “God likes matter - he made it.”

So in a season when we often think about shunning or doing without material things, perhaps the call of Christian disciples is to live more fully and gracefully in the stuff of life in the twenty-first century.

Part of that is to challenge and work for a more equitable distribution of material wealth. I work in a city which has grown in material wealth in the last twenty years, but where we have seen the discrepancies between the rich and poor increase.

Almost a third of children in Leeds are affected by poverty and in households where that is true, two thirds have family members in work.

That is why I am keen to support Living Wage initiatives.

In terms of living gracefully with our church buildings, Lent is a good time for Christian communities to look at what’s involved in becoming an eco church.

On an individual level, while this may not be open to those in fuel poverty, some of us could do no better this Lent than to get onto a solely green tariff for our domestic gas and electricity provision.

Live gracefully in God’s material world...

+Paul
Bishop of Kirkstall

Honorary Canons take their places at Ripon Cathedral

RIPON The following people were installed into their particular roles by the Bishop of Kirkstall, the Rt Revd Paul Slater:

Capitular Canon: Dr Richard Noake, Director of Education and a member of the Ripon Cathedral congregation.

Archbishop of York addresses lawyers at Bradford Cathedral

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, has preached a special centenary sermon at Bradford Cathedral as part of the annual Legal Service.

The Archbishop, who is an Advocate of the High Court of Uganda, joined members of the judiciary, including High Court judges and magistrates from across West Yorkshire, for this public service.

He entered the cathedral in a procession which included clergy, lawyers, the High Sheriff, Lord Lieutenant and the Lord Mayor of Bradford.

Very Revd Jerry Lepine, Dean of Bradford said: “The Legal Service is one of the high points of civic life in the Cathedral’s calendar.”

Dr Sentamu added: “As a former lawyer, I am committed to upholding the justice and mercy of God in our nation.”

Life long love of learning

Some 250 people gathered in Wakefield Cathedral to say goodbye to Canon John and Canon June Lawson whose life-long love of learning has helped forge the enduring relationship between the Community at Mirfield and the church in this area. John will resign his post as residentiary canon at Wakefield Cathedral while still continuing as principal of the Leeds School of Ministry hub at Mirfield. June is to take up parish ministry as vicar of the parishes of All Saints, Pontefract and St Giles with St Mary’s. Sub-dean, Canon Tony Macpherson said: “It was fitting to say our goodbyes on Candlemas Sunday which tells us to ‘Let now your servant depart in peace’.”

Wonky donkeys repairs offer

Does your church’s Nativity set have a wonky donkey or shabby sheep in need of repair? If so, then help may be at hand.

The hard work done by these much-loved figures in our churches may have taken its toll and only come to light when they were packed away after Epiphany.

John Neale (pictured), a member of St Luke’s Church, has recently carried out restoration work on a Nativity set from St John’s, a church in the same benefice of Cleckheaton. John is a keen craftsmen who began repairing similar Nativity figures last year. “I want the light and love of Christmas, Jesus’ birth and life, to be seen at its best for everyone and that is why I do this work,” explained John.

Yorkshire Cadets

The South and West Yorkshire Wing Air Cadets were welcomed for the first time to St Hilda’s Church to a service of thanksgiving for the work of the Air Training Corps. The service was attended by fifty cadets from across South and West Yorkshire, along with Father Darren Percival, Priest in Charge of Saint Hilda’s Cross Green, who presided and Bishop Paul Slater who preached.
The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu is encouraging all to share in the Church of England’s LentPilgrim journey.

Written by Bishop Steven Croft, co-author of the Pilgrim Course, the Pilgrim Journeys: The Beatitudes, provides a short daily reflection, a Bible reading, a prayer and suggested response.

“However you approach this Pilgrim Journey, I would like to encourage all to make space for God this Lent. Allow His word to dwell in you as we all seek to know Jesus better and to become more Christ-like in everything that we are and in everything that we do.”

Pilgrim Journeys: The Beatitudes, along with Pilgrim Journeys: The Lord’s Prayer are being used across the Church of England as part of this year’s LentPilgrim and EasterPilgrim campaigns.

Sign up now or download the app to receive daily reflections on the Beatitudes on the Church of England website www.churchofengland.org/pilgrim

The Green Energy Saving Scheme, which has led to the reduction of 2,142 tonnes of annual carbon reductions in churches since its introduction 3 years ago, is to be retained for a greener future.

Introduced to the Diocese of Leeds in 2015, 212 churches in the diocese now purchase their electricity and/or gas through the Green Journey, delivering an estimated total of £105,846 annual savings.

“By working in a dynamic partnership with a large commercial energy management company, we have been able to help churches switch to a renewable electricity and carbon neutral gas tariff,” said diocesan Environment Officer, Jemima Parker.

If you would like more information about how the Green Journey could help your church please contact jemima.parker@leeds.anglican.org or Craig Hogg on craig@greenjourney.org.