

Calendar

November and December Events

Shared Local Ministry Deanery Roadshow

2 Nov, 7pm - Abbeydore Deanery, Kingstone & Thruxton Village Hall
4 Nov, 7pm - Hereford City Deanery, St Peter's Church
10 Nov, 7pm - Lebury Deanery, St Peter's Church, Withington
11 Nov, 7pm - Ross & Archenfield Deanery, venue TBA
12 Nov, 7pm - Kington & Weobley Deanery, St Andrew's Church, Presteigne
(Severn Borders Deanery, date and venue TBA)

Spiritual Question Times

Evening conversations with Bishop Richard plus local panelist/s (venues tbc)

10 Nov, 7pm — with Chancellor James Pacey, The Buck's Head, Church Stretton

For more information and to register to attend, please visit our Eventbrite page at www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/united-kingdom--county-of-herefordshire/hereford-diocese/

Safeguarding Training Dates

Do check our website safeguarding pages for further dates.

4 Nov, 9.30am-12.30pm — Ludlow Mascall Centre - Leadership

11 Nov, 9.30am-12.30pm, Parish Centre Church Stretton, Raising Awareness

of Domestic Abuse

19 Nov, 10am-1pm, Diocesan Office Hereford, Raising Awareness of Domestic Abuse

24 Nov, 1.30pm-4.30pm - Diocesan Office Hereford - PTO Pathway

3 Dec, 10am-1pm - Diocesan Office Hereford - Leadership

10 Dec, 9.30am-12.30pm - Ludlow Mascall Centre - PTO Pathway



Letter from Tanzania

from The Rt Revd Richard Jackson, Bishop of Hereford

Dear Friends,

As I write this, I have just returned from a visit to our link diocese in Tanzania. We visited the Diocese of Masasi in the south of the country which celebrated its 100th anniversary at the end of September. It was an experience both joyful and gruelling in equal measure. I'm not sure the Church of England is quite yet ready for four-hour ordination services in 85-degree heat. The celebration service for the anniversary was an hour longer laced with local music, ululation, joyful singing and a nun playing the vuvuzela! She played it again when we went to the convent for dinner one evening as part of the nuns' dancing and singing welcome – you had to be there really.

Alongside the joy is grinding poverty and a huge disparity of wealth. Whilst Tanzania is one of the most stable democracies in Africa, there is still widespread corruption and a poorly maintained infrastructure. It took us 13 hours to drive the 600 km from Dar Es Salaam to our Masasi hostel. Periods of fast driving were interspersed

with bouncing through potholes almost as bad as South Shropshire.

It is easy to look at the Church in Tanzania with its spectacular growth, driven by genuine conversions to Jesus rather than church hopping, and think if only we transferred their patterns here we could have a similar experience. A simple transfer of methodology is unlikely to be successful. Culturally, English people are not as expressive. Similarly, we have such busy lives that 3-4 hour services with preaching of 45 minutes may not gain much traction.

The Christian message has always had to adapt as it moved from one culture to another through its history. Even the early churches described in the New Testament were very different from one another. There was conformity of belief, but great diversity of practice. The same is actually true in Tanzania depending on

Contd on p 2

CELEBRATING 1350 YEARS 2026 Year of Celebration

Cont'd from page 1

which UK missionary agency first brought the gospel to each part of the country. Even in the church of England, there is now a huge variation in congregational worship, even in the same parish. Perhaps the greatest lesson was not about a particular style, but the motivating question.

In Tanzania it was 'How can we adapt our practice to make the message more accessible to those outside the Church so they can become followers of Jesus?'

There don't seem to be many arguments about style of worship rooted in their personal preference. Mission comes first. Congregations are agents of community transformation. God is the one on whom they depend for everything, not a spiritual lifestyle accessory. I think all of us who visited found this profoundly challenging. I hope we here all might also.

The Rt Revd Richard Jackson, Bishop of Hereford



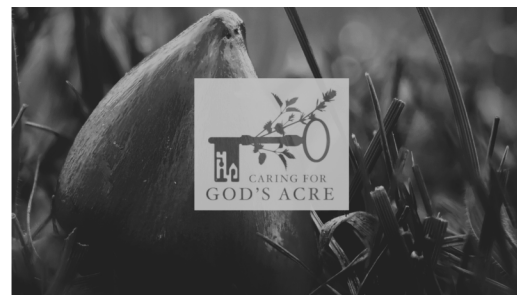
New 2027 Lent course for Hereford Diocese

Advance Notice ! Forward-planners will have spotted that Lent begins very early next year on Feb 10. But relax! Bishop Richard has commissioned a new Lent Course specially for the Diocese, available next month. It helps people revisit and develop their basic Christian commitments by way of putting together their own Rule of Life celebrating rhythms of prayer, study and service. For an advance copy, email the diocese's Three Saints Fellowship:

3SF@hereford.anglican.org

Caring for God's Acre

by Kaitlyn Elverson



Evergreen Immortals: Yew Tree Folklore

In St George's Churchyard in Clun, Shrops, stands a marvellous sight to behold. Estimated to be around 2,000 years old, lives a majestic ancient Yew tree. As the oldest tree in Shropshire, this beautiful specimen has likely borne witness to rich history. It has stood tall, guarding the churchyard since medieval times. If it could speak, it would surely have stories to tell.

There are many Yews across the UK churchyards, each with their own unique heritage. The English Yew, *Taxus baccata*, is an evergreen tree that is commonly found in churchyards, hundreds and even thousands of years old. Many of these likely predate the churchyards they are found in, and have strong ties to Pagan, Celtic and Druidic traditions.

Yews are steeped in rich and sometimes dark folklore, known as the "tree of the dead" for several reasons. It is thought that these trees were planted in sacred places to watch over the dead and guide their passage to the other side. The species is known for its longevity and habit of rooting from drooping branches that touch the ground, further cementing its lore of being

a tree of death and rebirth. All parts of the tree are toxic to humans; in Shakespeare's Scottish play, a poisonous concoction featuring Yew berries is made.

In Kingley Vale, Hants, legend says there was a great battle between locals and Vikings. When the local soldiers fell, their bodies were buried in the forests where the Yew trees now stand. The forests are supposedly haunted by the soldiers, who possess the Yews and come alive at night. At Nevern Church in Pembrokeshire, the 'Bleeding Yews' appear to bleed red sap from their trunks. According to legend, they bleed in sympathy with Jesus' crucifixion.

There are a few things you can do to help out Yews. Most Yews don't need much management and generally like to be left alone. However, clearing anything over their root plate and underneath the trees as well as any ivy growing up the trunk will give them the best conditions to thrive. Think too about how you can involve your local communities with our Love Your Yew Week in Feb 2027. To find out more, follow the link to our website to read why Yews are so important to churchyards and how you can help them today.

Kaitlyn Elverson

Engagement Officer, Nature in Sacred Places Project (NiSP)

www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

Individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code diomem22