

NEXT STEPS NEWS

NEXT STEPS
ON THE
WAY

AUTUMN 2023



PIONEERING TALK AT OUR AUTUMN LEARNING DAY

Our latest Learning and Sharing Day took place on Wednesday 13th September at Epiphany House in Truro. It attracted 32 participants, including representatives of ten deaneries and all five Transforming Mission projects.

Prayers and scripture were led by [Revd Sophie Chatten](#) from Falmouth. Sophie had chosen as our text Acts 17:22-31, a suitably pioneering passage for a day whose main focus was on pioneering ministry. Prayers were also offered by the Rural Deans of Kerrier, Carnarvon North and West Wivelshire and by the chair of Stratton's Deanery Implementation Team.

The main session of the day (which ran for two hours before lunch and an hour afterwards) was chaired by Lindsey Morgan-Lundie, pioneer network facilitator for the diocese. We were joined on Zoom by the co-founders of Pioneering Parishes, Revd Tina Hodgett and Revd Greg Bakker, an organisation which, as Greg

explained, recognises that "pioneering is an integral part of parish ministry". Pioneering, Tina explained, is "not about doing more – it's about shifting our position in the world".

This introduction was followed by speakers from across the diocese who shared inspiring accounts of their good practice in pioneering ministry.

Revd Elaine Munday from [Bodmin Way](#) recalled how, at her ordination, the Bishop at the time had urged the newly ordained to be "imaginative and creative" in their ministry.

The day demonstrated a broad range of examples of such imagination and creativity, highlighting community-led initiatives such as the men's faith group in Liskeard and the [children's clothes bank in Camborne](#).

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

PIONEERING TALK AT OUR LATEST LEARNING DAY, CONTINUED...

“Is it pioneering?” asked Revd Graham Adamson of the initiative supported by the church in Camborne and run by a group of local mums. “It definitely represents the green shoots of where the kingdom of God is for that community.”

Niall Dunne spoke with similar passion about Liskeard’s men’s group.

“Meeting physical needs is important, but there’s always this longing to go further than that,” he said. “For me personally, it’s been the most amazing privilege to be part of this group. What’s amazing is seeing the ownership of this group – it feels like a real sharing of faith together and support. Some of its members have talked about it as a lifeline.”

Niall recalled Bishop Hugh’s response to their initiative: “our challenge is to allow these people to reshape the Church”.

Lindsey added that such work is “about enabling people to be pioneers”.

Rob Pearce explained how Bradoc Church had significantly grown its reach through its collaboration with its local community and primary school to become “a church that celebrates children and young people at its heart, that embraces an innovative and pioneering culture and that promotes God’s creation”.

Bradoc’s initiatives have included the development of a digital infopoint, hand-chimes, junior bellringing, [Warm Wednesdays](#), Open the Book, a piano project, [a Creation Care collaboration with Braddock School](#), and messy church. “Once we went down the messy church route, we discovered it was just like junior bellringing but without the bells!” Rob joked.

They’ve also worked to ensure the representation of all age groups on their PCC.

“Growth takes a while to happen, but don’t get despondent – it will happen,” Rob said. “When the community can see you’re doing things for the community, the community responds.”

Jamie Moore spoke of his work to modernise the Church’s mission in [St Austell](#), where they’ve introduced multimedia screens, backing tracks, new lighting and seating, a more appealing songpool and a more interactive style and format of worship itself.

“We looked at the environment of our church and asked what will appeal to families and younger people,” he said. “My mandate was to move forward into a more contemporary way of doing church, more spirit-led, with more congregational participation.”

Robin Mitchell and Joff Phipps of [TM Truro](#) also presented their vision of what Robin called “another way of doing church, another way of doing community”.

Joff explained that they had started by asking themselves “who are the people that other churches aren’t engaging with that we could offer something to”. As a result, they’ve introduced a broad range of engagement activities, including football evenings, pub performances, home church services and informal pilgrimages.

In the final session of the day, diocesan Safeguarding leads Revd Andy Earl and Jo Pomery introduced initial plans for the upcoming diocesan safeguarding audit (expected to take place in April 2024), and offered safeguarding advice for deaneries and TM teams.

Andy stressed that “we’re all pioneers, in one way or another” and emphasised that “we need to ensure that safeguarding doesn’t become a reason to say no. It should be used as an enabling tool.”

Jo concurred. “Recognising risk internally and externally is essentially what constitutes safeguarding. We’re here to support that. I love the word ‘enabling’. Safeguarding should enable you to do things – and safely,” she said.

The key words and phrases to come out of the day of lively discussion, as proposed by those present, were ‘enabling’, ‘reshaping’, ‘hope’, ‘community’, ‘takes time’, ‘permission-giver’ and ‘risk’.

Having only just joined the diocese as pioneer minister for Kerrier, [Revd Susie Templeton](#) spoke of the liberating idea that “the pioneer role is different” and that “we’re doing something that doesn’t have a great deal of precedent.”

She added that “we can’t be afraid of failure”.

But what, she was asked, would she need in order to succeed?

“The grace of God,” she said.

CELEBRATING OUR LOCAL WORSHIP LEADERS



Lay ministers, worship leaders and readers play a vital part in the life of the Diocese of Truro, and continue into the present a crucial strand in the great tradition of Christian discipleship. Over the past few months, we've had the opportunity to hear the stories of some of those who've chosen to serve their church, congregations and communities in these ways.

"I want the church to continue and to be here for people to get from it what I get from it – the strengthening of my faith," says [Charlotte Irwin](#), from St Agnes. "To be part of helping that continue is important." She suggests that her church's collaborative approach way has helped to make their faith community work together rather like a family: "When you're have a meal with your family, you don't just sit and wait to be served. You all muck in. Everything's better when everyone pulls together."

[Kay Robinson](#), in Philleigh, feels similarly about the value of her parish's collaborative church community: "We try to adapt our services to accommodate the needs of our community. We're very much part of the community. We're here to serve the community. It's really important that we meet our community's diverse needs."

In Devoran, [Jane Darlington](#) also stresses that point: "We have to be a church without walls, We're part of the community. We're not just here for an hour on Sundays. Hopefully, what we do and how we help each other might inspire people, and make them want to find out more. We're just here for the community. And we need the community too. It's so important that we're out there and seen as we actually are."

Down in Donderry on Cornwall's southeast coast, [David Watters](#) echoes that emphasis: "The greatest satisfaction I've had in this role has been that direct community involvement – keeping a finger on the pulse of the local community and seeing where there are gaps that the church can fill – whether that's

leadership roles for myself or other local Christians, or just helping out and getting to know people who are isolated and vulnerable. It's about showing people that the Church isn't about itself and its own ends but about loving and caring for those in need."

Focal minister for Colan near Newquay, [Claire Burgess](#) speaks of the particular need of the Church to explore new ways of engaging with communities: "We need to be more creative in how we reach people and teach people. We need to engage with people where they are, regardless of who they are, walking alongside them. And we need to continue to enable lay people to explore and follow their calling."

[Liz Lane](#) explains that, as the rector of her benefice has been based in a neighbouring village since the 1950s, she's become someone to whom local people in her parish of Warleggan will often turn, in the years she's served as their reader. "It's a hugely rewarding thing to do, but I don't think it's something you can do half-heartedly," she explains. "It has to be a full life decision. It's not just about turning up in church on a Sunday and doing your bit."

Up on Cornwall's northeast coast, Stratton has recently seen the commissioning of [eight new local worship leaders](#).

Liz says that she's taken on the role because she believes that it's where her faith has taken her. "I'm here because God wants me here," she says. "It sounds super-spiritual, but that's the truth."

"We have an obligation to meet the wishes of our congregation, to minister to the people we've got and to gradually give them new experiences," says Judy.

Her friend Val adds: "I really want to come at it with all the reverence that I can. A lot of prayer goes on before we come out and stand at the front of the church. I want to create a calm and relaxed atmosphere where people can feel themselves touched by God."

OUR OVERSIGHT MINISTERS... IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Earlier this year, the [Reverend Douglas Wren](#) became oversight minister for the Roseland peninsula.

He says that his new role reminds him of what St Paul wrote to the Ephesians about the need to equip people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up in the world.

"It's not about me doing everything, but about empowering, encouraging and supporting others in their ministry," he explains. "My role is to ensure that every church in the Roseland is supported and confident, and has the most appropriate kind of local leadership."

He's especially enthusiastic about collaborating with a broad range of different people in the Church. He emphasizes that he has always enjoyed working alongside lay ministers and has come to rely on such enormously valuable partnerships.

"What I'm working towards in the Roseland is establishing a community of ministers, lay and ordained, so that we can learn from one another, rejoice with one another, weep with one another, hold one another up, and encourage one another," he says.

Further east along Cornwall's southern coast, the [Reverend Jo Northey](#) was appointed this summer as oversight minister for the Rame peninsula. She says that she was particularly attracted to the role by its emphasis on collaborative working.

"I'm a great believer that church works best when we all play our parts, when we don't just rely on a priest or a few people to make it work," she explains. "I'll spend much of my time building up people to lead worship and engage with our communities. That's really exciting."

Meanwhile, the [Reverend Paul Holley](#) also stresses that his own ministry in Bodmin has depended upon a strong team of people that he's been able to pull together.

"I've benefited from adopting an oversight model in that I've been able to draw ministers both lay and ordained into the life of the church," he says. "There's a very good level of participation in all of our churches. We've hugely benefited from our self-supporting priests, Readers and other lay ministers."

Half a dozen focal ministers have been commissioned by the Diocese of Truro in the last few years.

"We have a structure in which I don't have to be everywhere all the time," he says. "If you ask church members and church officers what my favourite word is, I'd think they'd say 'participation'. I believe everyone's got a part to play."

In Looe, the [Reverend Ben Morgan Lundie](#) shows a similar commitment to a form of ministry that enables parishioners to become active participants.

"I'm passionate about the church thriving and being relevant to the community," he says. "I want to encourage and equip everyone to take part in ministry, and not just those who've been ordained. It's not about a bland corporate approach. It's not about making everyone the same. I want each of my parishes to be authentic, to celebrate the local and to relate to its community."

Up in the Benefice of Lann Pydar, the [Reverend Helen Baber](#) feels similarly about the importance of empowering members of her church communities.

"Any role that's about bringing people together and enabling them – that's what energizes me," she enthuses. "What I really love is pastoral ministry. I feel called to this role as an on-the-ground priest – to help build from ground level up. I have a particular pastoral responsibility to support those people working to support our parish churches – the churchwardens, the local ministers, the members of the Parochial Church Councils – all the people vital to local church leadership."

CARING FOR CREATION ACROSS THE DIOCESE



It's been quite a year for Creation Care.

[St Mary's Church at Bradoc](#) and [St Martin's in Liskeard](#) have both earned silver awards in the national Eco Church scheme.

"We do our best to make people environmentally aware – in a nice way," says Bradoc's Rob Pearce. "It was very nice to win the award."

"I'm delighted," adds Mike Sturgess, treasurer at St Martin's PCC. "It shows our church is serious about the diocesan policy to cherish the natural environment."

Meanwhile, the Diocese of Truro itself – along with several notable parishes – has achieved [bronze in the Eco Church awards](#).

These awards and our own Kernow Green Church awards were celebrated at [a special service for climate justice](#) which took place at Truro Cathedral in September.

At the same time, churches and church schools have been working to reduce their carbon footprints, from [Devoran](#) and [Mawnan](#) to [Redruth and Portreath](#).

"God created the world and created everything in it for the benefit of Man and for Man to cherish it and not abuse it," says Joan Doble, Creation Care champion at St Andrew's in Redruth. "We try to make the congregation and the community aware of their carbon footprints, and encourage them to do things, even if it's only small things at home, to reduce, reuse and recycle."

"It's important that we do things to make our churches carbon neutral," adds Creation Care champion at St Mary's in Portreath, Helen Jones. "But we also need change from government and supermarkets and powerful people. There has to be a sea-change. We've got to speak up. God's given us this beautiful world, and we have to care for it."

The Diocese has also started work on energy-

saving [retrofits to clergy homes](#) in order to meet its commitment to the Church of England's target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

Creation Care initiatives have meanwhile involved local communities in exciting environmental activities in such places as [Landrake](#), [Lanlivery](#), [Falmouth](#) and [Stratton](#), while the good people of [Trelawny Benefice](#) have continued to recognise the importance of our relationship with the natural world in a series of outdoor rural services.

In August, Judith Ayers organised a 'Nature Detectives' day at St Sampson's Church in South Hill.

"These sorts of events are great for engaging families and children with church," she says. "Children are very eco-minded and this is a fantastic way to introduce the God of Creation into their lives engaging them with their natural curiosity and care for nature. It's a fantastic way of building relationships with families and creates many opportunities for conversations. It shows the church as relevant and active in its care of the planet."

This is a point with which Judy Dunne, schools liaison officer at St Andrew's in Stratton, would wholeheartedly agree.

"These children are really aware and concerned about the environment," Judy says. "They want to make things better. That's very positive."



We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our participants for their contributions throughout this year, and to wish you all the very best blessings for a happy & healthy, peaceful & prosperous, and fruitful & sustainable 2024.