



## Harrogate Deanery Synod 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024

St James' Church, Church Street, Wetherby, LS22 6LP

### GUEST SPEAKER:

**Jemima Parker, Leeds Diocesan Environment Officer**

**Present**      11 Clergy      28 Laity

**Apologies**      7 Clergy      8 Laity

**Welcome** The synod was opened by The Revd Matthew Peat, Vicar of St James's Church, Wetherby with Linton, who warmly welcomed members to the church and the meeting.

**Evening Prayer** was led by Elaine Hainsworth, David Startup and Robert Haskins, from St James's, Church, Wetherby with Linton. At the end, Revd Dr Alan Garrow, Area Dean, thanked the Wetherby team for their opening prayers. He then asked synod members to continue in an attitude of worship to recognise what is happening in the Anglican Communion at this testing time. A period of silent prayer was concluded by members joining together to say the Lord's Prayer.

**Welcoming new Synod Members** The Area Dean warmly welcomed three synod members who were attending for the first time:

- Revd Sarah Tapley – Curate, St Andrew's, Starbeck
- Liza Gisborne – All Saints, Kirkby Overblow
- Keith Dale – St Thomas the Apostle, Killinghall

**Apologies for Absence** See above.

**Minutes of the Last Meeting** The Minutes were accepted and signed by the Area Dean.

**Matters Arising not on the Agenda** There were no matters arising.

**Elections** The Area Dean explained that the Area Mission and Pastoral Committee is significant when it comes to Clergy deployment. The AMPC works on three-year cycle and appointments are now due for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2027 for one Clergy representative and one Laity.

The Area Dean asked if anyone in the Synod is interested in standing for either of these vacancies; as there were no responses, the Synod formally elected Dr Sue Atkin and Revd John Smith (or Revd Dr Alan Garrow) as its representative. With regards to the General Synod elections, voting is currently underway.

## Good News from the Deanery

### 1) **St James's Church, Wetherby with Linton:** Mr Robert Haskins, informed about two events.

- *No Trick Just Treat.* Robert explained that this event was held at 6.00pm on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024. This was an open invitation to drop-in and participate in games and crafting. People were encouraged to bring their family and to enter the pumpkin carving competition. It was hugely successful as 300+ children and adults attended.
- *Boat and fishes.* Robert informed that the Revd Matthew Peat has asked the congregation to contribute to the vision of the church in 5 years' time by writing their ideas on paper fish which are then attached to the boat picture, thus creating a collage of ideas and suggestions. On the first anniversary of Matthew's licensing, the PCC will hold an away-day to review all suggestions and create a vision which will be put to the congregation.

Robert also explained that as part of their Eco Church drive, St James' applied for 'Give to Go Green' funding; a match-funding project from the Church of England which helps parishes double their locally raised donations for carbon-cutting projects. The initial grant offered was £3,720. But St James's has exceeded this target and now has a pot of £7525, including the grant, to spend on installing solar panels to the Church Room roof.

### 2) **St John's and St Luke's, Bilton:** The Revd Laura Martin, Team Vicar, and Mrs Val Carr reported that:

- They have started a Fresh Expression at Dene Park Community Centre called Monday First. It is a monthly worship service which has grown out of the weekly Coffee Morning (called Thirst) held at that same community centre. It started in September and has about 20 people attending; 8 of whom are new to 'church'.
- They started a monthly Cafe Church at St Luke's in May and now get 40-50 people a month at that service including children.
- St John's achieved its Eco Silver award a while ago whilst St Luke's (same benefice) had not yet been registered. St Luke's was registered in March and this week it achieved its Bronze award, a really splendid achievement.
- This Sunday there will be a baptism for a whole family of six - including adults, teenagers and children. This is something really joyful and exciting; it is happening as a result of community connections to the church.

### 3) **St Wilfrid's, Benefice of Lower Wharfedale:** Mrs Moira Keith LLM, advised that they had held their first Lego Church in St Wilfrid's, Pool; with 15 children, 1 baby and 8 adults attending. She explained that regrettably they do not have children in their main worship services, so this event is very encouraging. Lego Church happens monthly at St Wilfrid's. Moira also informed that a monthly Lego Church, will begin in December, on a Monday after school. at All Saints, Kirkby Overblow.

**Harrogate Deanery Eco Church.** Mrs Deborah Booth, Harrogate Area Environment Champion, reminded us that the aim of Harrogate Deanery is to encourage all churches in the Deanery to sign up to Eco Church and then to progress to the next level of award. Deborah informed that she is in

regular contact with each Parish Environment Officer and has meetings with them on zoom. Deborah said how inspiring she found it to hear about the different initiatives being implemented across the Deanery. Here are some praiseworthy examples:

- St John's Bilton, held a coffee morning on Saturday 12th October, at which they raised £700 for the Bilton Conservation Society.
- Christ Church, Harrogate, has creation care as a regular PCC agenda item and provides updates in the Parish magazine.
- St Mary's, Goldsborough, has met to review and update their Eco Church questionnaire.
- Kairos Network Church is working towards achieving their Silver Award.
- St Robert's, Pannal, has various signs displayed around the church to confirm how seriously they are taking the climate crisis.
- St Mark's, Harrogate, has recently submitted their Gold Award application.

Deborah also reinforced the message that if a Parish is struggling to find a Parish Environment Officer, they do not need to seek an Eco Warrior; what is more important is to find someone who is seeking the Kingdom of God and who is keen to serve. Deborah concluded by reassuring everyone that their church is very likely already doing a lot of good Eco things.

### **Deanery Synods 2025**

The Area Dean, thanked Deborah, and informed the Synod that the Harrogate Deanery Synod Eco Church Year will conclude on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025, when Dr Stewart Davies, will speak about 'Influencing Structures', as this is the session which was postponed last July prior to the General Election.

The Area Dean also advised that the focus of the Synods in 2025 will be **Encouraging Lay Ministry (ELM)**, but **Eco Church** will remain as a regular synod agenda item and the Eco Church slide will be updated with new information as Churches progress their Eco journey. The Area Dean reinforced the message that it is hoped that every Parish/Benefice will have some illustration of their registration on the slide and that as a Synod we will continue to encourage Parishes on their Eco journey.

**Encouraging Lay Ministry (ELM).** The Area Dean introduced Dr Stewart Davies, Deanery LLM Convenor. Stewart referred to the bid from the Rural Change Fund previously talked about at the June synod. He explained that the bid is to provide money to employ a part time ELM Coordinator. The bid has now been reviewed and approved by Bishop Anna, and Jude Smith, Barnabus.

Stewart explained that a **Steering Group** has been formed to help shape and drive forward this initiative. Steering group members include:

- Dr Stewart Davies, Deanery LLM Convenor
- Revd Dr Alan Garrow, Area Dean, Harrogate
- Revd Stroma McDermott, Rector of the Lower Wharfedale Benefice
- Revd Mike Resch, Vicar, St Mark's, Harrogate
- Revd Phil Carman, Vicar, St Andrew's, Starbeck

Stewart shared with members the **ELM Vision**: *Working across the Harrogate Deanery to nurture, affirm and connect lay ministries, enabling a learning and outward-focused Christian presence in local communities.* Further information can be found in the paper attached to these Minutes.

Stewart provided further detail about the **role of the ELM Coordinator**. He explained that a job specification has been written and will be published later this month. This is a part-time role for two days a week during school term time. The role will be vital for implementing the vision and plan set by the ELM Steering Group and the Coordinator will work with Incumbents (Clergy in charge of parish churches) and lay people participating in a range of ministries. The ELM Coordinator will be expected to accomplish two key things:

- 1) Help ELM in rural benefices.
- 2) Form a 'Community of Practice' in each lay ministry area.

The Area Dean conclude this agenda item, by stating that this is really important work, and it is good to see such energy going into encouraging lay ministry.

### **Vacancies up-date**

- 1) **Walkingham Hill Benefice.** Mr Robert Haskins, informed that there was a meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> October with Bishop Anna, to see if there is any possibility of a partnership between Walkingham Hill and Kairos Network Church. Robert said that there had been several previous attempts to fill this position using a more traditional route, but these have been unsuccessful. The Area Dean stated that this is another innovative move which could attract outside attention. We will watch this space!
- 2) **Hampsthwaite, Birstwith and Killinghall.** Dr Sue MacDonald, Churchwarden, explained that the post for a new Vicar was advertised towards the end of September 2024. Interviews will be held on 10th December. Sue praised the sterling work provided by the faithful retired Clergy in the Deanery who are outstanding at keeping the services in all three churches running.
- 3) **St John's & St Luke's, Bilton.** Revd Laura Martin, Team Vicar, informed that the advertisement for the new Team Rector will be published on 16th December 2024.

**Deanery Finance.** The Treasurer, Mr Iain Ward-Campbell, humorously explained that Harrogate Deanery accounts will have increased by £45 by the end of the year. Iain also urged members to support and pay their Parish Share. He reinforced the message that the Diocese is totally dependent on the Parish Share to pay for our Clergy in the Harrogate Deanery.

### **Guest Speaker: Jemima Parker, Leeds Diocesan Environment Officer.**

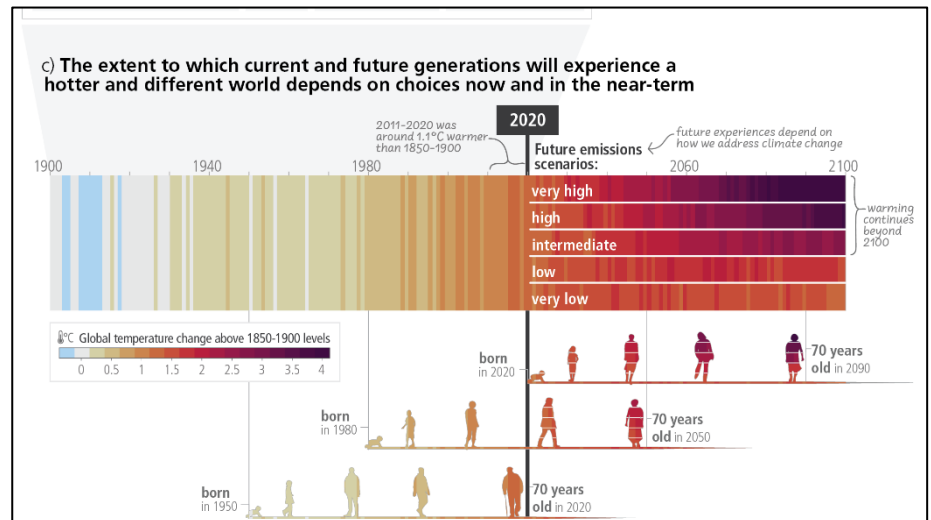
The Area Dean warmly welcomed Jemima to the Synod and confirmed that she has been working in this role for 12 years. Jemima then informed members that she will be finishing the role at Christmas to spend more time making her own home more carbon neutral, as well as working in a voluntary role as Chair of a local Climate Action charity in Harrogate.

Jemima then commended Harrogate Deanery for spending this year focusing on the environment.

**29<sup>th</sup> UN Climate Conference of Parties (COP29).** Jemima drew our attention to Keir Starmer's new 'ambitious' climate target for UK. He told the COP29 climate conference that he is committed to 81% emissions cut by 2035. This means that the UK is a nation that is committing to moving further and faster in reducing our carbon emissions than previously, and this can only be achieved by changes in our lifestyles.

### Why do we need to act?

Jemima talked through a slide which showed the widespread impact and damage which climate change has already caused in the last 100 years and stressed that the extent to which current and future generations will experience a hotter and different world depends on our choices now and in the near term. [Figure AR6 WG2](#)



Jamima supported her argument with the two examples:

- The temperature recorded in Barnsley on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022, was 40°C; this was so hot that it caused wildfires in the area.
- A map showing the potential rise in sea levels and the extent to which Yorkshire beaches and coastal towns, surrounding the Humber estuary, could be underwater by 2050.

Jemima pointed out that nationally we cannot afford to put coastal defences around all these areas, so land and homes will be lost. She stated that farmers are already struggling, and this is affecting the increase of food prices and insurance costs due to flooding. So, what can we do as churches?

**The Eco Church Award Scheme.** This scheme allows churches to celebrate what they are doing and can do to embed creation care within the life of the church. Jemima referred to the 5 areas of the award. [Eco Church - An A Rocha UK Project](#)

- Worship and Teaching
- Buildings and Energy
- Land and Nature
- Community and Global Engagement
- **Lifestyle – the focus of this evening.**



Jemima reiterated how impressed she was with the number of churches in Harrogate Deanery who have signed up to the Eco Church Award Scheme. She said that she had not been to another Deanery who has so many churches on the list.

- Bilton St John's – Silver
- Goldsborough St Mary – Bronze
- Harrogate Kairos - Bronze
- Harrogate St Mark's –Silver
- Harrogate St Wilfrid's – Silver
- Harrogate Christ Church – Silver
- Harrogate St Peter – Bronze
- Killinghall St Thomas –Registered
- Knaresborough St John the Baptist – Silver
- Pannal St Robert's – Bronze
- Starbeck St Andrew – Bronze
- Wetherby St James - Bronze
- 14 Parish Environment Officers

**Why as Christians should we do this?** Jemima stated that as Christians this is the most important thing we should be doing. Her next slides provided underpinning Biblical references which make a compelling theological case for why need to fully commit to creation care:

- The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn **over all creation**. *Colossians 1:15*
- For in him **all things** were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rules or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. *Colossians 1:16*
- The God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground. *Genesis 1:26*
- For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself **all things**, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. *Colossians 1: 19 – 20*
- This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which, I, Paul, have become a servant. *Colossians 1:23b*
- He (Jesus) said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation”. *Mark 16:15*

Jemima strongly urged members to read Colossians Chapter 1. She emphasised that Jesus was at the start of creation. He is the creator of the world because of the Trinity, therefore the world is Jesus’s creation; created for Him to bring him glory.

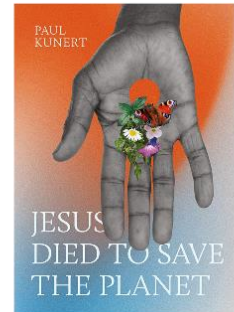
Jemima asked, ‘so where do people come into this?’ She affirmed that right at the beginning of creation, God told us what our purpose was; this was the first great commission (Genesis 1:26). Our purpose is to rule over, to look after creation. The word ‘rule’ has been misinterpreted over time to mean ‘dominate’, but Jemima emphasised that we are rulers like our servant king, Jesus, who was prepared to sacrifice everything to save his creation. That is how we should ‘rule’. Jemima referred

to Colossians 1:19-20, making the point that Jesus's death and resurrection were for the whole of creation. This is now our purpose and our model.

Jemima posed the question: 'Are we servants of this gospel or of something else?' (Colossians 1:23b). She challenged us to think about, 'What gospel are we proclaiming?' She referred to this as the second great commission (Mark 16:15).

**Jesus Died to Save the Planet**<sup>1</sup> [Jesus Died to Save the Planet | LICC](#)

Jemima recommended this book which was published in 2024. The introduction states, "Our planet is at breaking point. There is no planet B, but there is hope for God's world. Because Jesus died to save the planet." Later it says, "Read on to discover how you can make kingdom-like decisions in your everyday life that will help the earth flourish. Then share your new perspective with your church family..."



**What are the Church of England's Five Marks of Mission?**

[Microsoft Word - The Five Marks of Mission FINAL](#)

**Treasure/Tell/Teach/Tend/Transform**

- *To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.*
- To proclaim the good news of the Kingdom.
- To teach, baptise, nurture, new believers.
- To respond to human need by loving service.
- To transform unjust structures in society, to challenge violence of any kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation.

Jemima made the point that if we are damaging creation we are damaging the world that was made to glorify God. Here are some questions to challenge our thinking about our attitude towards creation care.

**Eco Church – Lifestyles (Discipleship)** [Our Church Building - Diocese of Leeds](#)

- What are you already doing?
- How can you build this into your thinking about what you are encouraging others to do?
- What one step could you take next?

**Here is a list of practical things you can do to demonstrate the Five Marks of Mission in action.**

Jemima pointed out that you can't do everything but urged members to identify 1 thing you can do at home and 1 thing you can do at church. These activities will additionally provide evidence to gain points for your Eco Church awards.

---

<sup>1</sup> Paul Kunert, *Jesus Died to Save the Planet* (London: The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, 2024)

### 1) Preaching [Preaching for God's World](#)

Jemima strongly recommended the 'Preaching for God's World' website. It states, "We seek to help clergy, lay preacher and all Christians to explore the set lectionary readings for each week from the perspective of creation care and ecological justice. By providing weekly reflections from activists, theologians and church leaders across the work church, we hope that this blog will resource and encourage Christians to grow in our care for God's creation." Jemima emphasised that we need to include scripture when preaching about caring for creation.

### 2) Prayer

Jemima stressed the importance of praying for the multitude of different environmental issues around the world. She encouraged us to start with something small and to pray daily or weekly e.g. birds in your garden getting through a harsh winter; a local planning application which has environmental implications; a person who is involved in implementing environmental issues at work. Refer to these websites for further information:

[Our Worship - Diocese of Leeds](#)

[Resources – Pray and Fast for the Climate](#)

### 3) Lifestyle – Commitment

Jemima drew our attention to the questions asked in the Eco Church survey section. She informed that the first thing which is asked is for your church to make a commitment:

- Our church has a strategy or plan to promote ethical and environmentally aware consumption patterns by individuals and households. Yes/No

Jemima urged members to take this question back to the PCC and to devise a plan for how your church is going to upskill and encourage members of the congregation to commit to becoming more environmentally conscious.

### 4) Lifestyle – Influence

Jemima also urged members to think about the ways they can influence the congregation in their church e.g. using weekly newsletters. Jemima mentioned that she has written two useful lists of Eco Top Tips for weekly parish newsletters – she suggested that members include one tip in each weekly newsletter. Please use them!

- *52 Eco Top Tips for your weekly parish newsletter* [1ceb4b18-e1f3-4d3b-8582-bc69c2498b26.docx](#)
- *52 Eco Top Tips for weekly parish newsletter* [3429ff8e-4846-4016-a790-119bf131c67d.docx](#)

Engaging in civic society activities is another good way of moving forward on creation matters as reflected in the Eco Church questionnaire:

- Our church actively encourages the whole congregation to take part in social or environmental campaigns the church supports (whatever form this takes e.g. signing petitions, hosting MP at a church service, attending marches or large demonstrations). Routinely/Occasionally/Never.



## 5) Lifestyle – Carbon Footprint

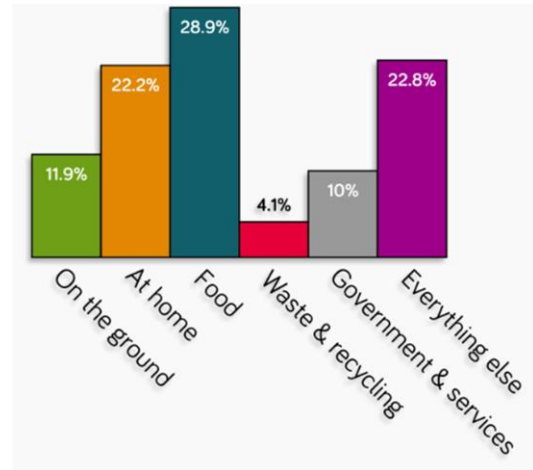
The Eco Church questionnaire also asks the following question:

- Our church promotes auditing of individual and household carbon footprints (eg by using Climate Stewards, Giki, Take the Jump, the WWF Footprint Calculator or other calculators).  
Routinely/Occasionally/Never.

Jemima argued that it is important to encourage the congregation to measure their own carbon footprint.

However, it is important to understand which create big

carbon footprints, and which do not. The chart shows that the average UK carbon footprint is 9.4 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum [www.climatestewards.org](http://www.climatestewards.org) Jemima urged everyone to keep recycling.



## Carbon Quiz

Towards the end of her presentation, Jemima showed a number of images and asked members to say which they thought produced the most Carbon emissions; it was an informative exercise.

## Help is at Hand Advice

Jemima reminded churches that they are not on their own, there is help at hand. E.g.

- **Training** [Events and Training Opportunities - Diocese of Leeds](#)
  - a. Saving Creation Ministry Training Pathway
    - i. Bronze
    - ii. Silver
    - iii. Gold
  - b. CofE Net Zero and Nature webinars and guidance
- **Advice** [www.leeds.anglican.org/our-faith/environment/need-support/](http://www.leeds.anglican.org/our-faith/environment/need-support/)
  - a. Eco Mission Enablers
  - b. Area Environment Champion – Deborah Booth
  - c. Net Zero Carbon Church Building Consultant
  - d. Fran Taylor – Net Zero Carbon Funding Officer
- **Funding** [Funding - Diocese of Leeds](#)
  - a. Grants lists
  - b. Diocese Church Building Fund
  - c. Give to Go Green
  - d. Fran Taylor – Net Zero Carbon Funding Office
- **Newsletter** [God's Green Fingers Newsletter - Diocese of Leeds](#)
  - a. Inspiring good news stories
  - b. Events and training
  - c. Magazine article

- d. Eco tips
- e. Eco joke

### **One Final Question:**

Jemima concluded her presentation by asking this thought-provoking question:

- What one thing are you going to talk about with your PCC, congregation and community?

### **Open Forum**

**Revd Ben Askew, Pioneer Minister, Kairos Network Church**, informed members that there are several excellent local conservation and land use projects in the Harrogate area. These include -

- Pinewoods Conservation Group - <https://www.pinewoodsconservationgroup.org.uk/>
- Long Lands Common - <https://www.longlandscommon.org/>
- Save Rotary Wood - <https://www.pinewoodsconservationgroup.org.uk/>
- Nidd Action Group - <https://www.niddactiongroup.org/>

Ben further explained that some of these organisations have current campaigns to protect or improve access to green space in the Harrogate area. He said he contacted some over the last year and asked about engagement with faith groups. He was told they had had very little contact but are keen to build relationships. Ben thinks that there are other such groups linked to land across the Deanery and suggests that one way to help church members grow a greener lifestyle is to befriend their local land charities and conservation groups.

At the end, the Area Dean thanked Jemima very warmly. He expressed his sadness at losing her from this role as she provided some valuable and helpful learning this evening. He also praised her for expressing the need for creation care and providing a robust theological background.

**A.O.B** There was none.

**Closing prayers** were led by the Area Dean. The meeting finished at 9.00pm.

### **FUTURE DATES for 2025.**

- **Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025** – Standing Committee. Online. 12.00 – 12.30pm
- **Tuesday, 21st January 2025 – St John’s Church, Vicarage Lane, Knaresborough, HG5 9AE.**  
Speaker: Dr Stewart Davies, Chair of Sustainable Development Partnership for the City of **Bradford Metropolitan District. Non-executive board member at the Environment Agency.**  
Reader at St Peter’s Church, Harrogate. Topic: *Eco Church: Challenges of Transforming Systems*
- **Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025** – Standing Committee. Online. 12.00 – 12.30pm
- **Wednesday, 26th March 2025** – All Saints, Kirkby Overblow, Harrogate, HG3 1HH. Speaker: TBC
- **Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025** – Standing Committee. Online. 12.00 – 12.30pm

- **Thursday, 3rd July 2025** – Arkendale Community Hall, Moor Lane, Arkendale, Knaresborough, HG5 0RF. Speaker: TBC
- **Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025** – Standing Committee. Online. 12.00 – 12.30pm
- **Thursday, 6th November 2025** – St Oswald’s Church, Church Lane, Collingham, Wetherby, LS22 5AU. Speaker: TBC

**ALL SYNOD MEETINGS SCHEDULED – 7pm for 7.30 pm – 9 pm**

Please send any amendments, questions or items for the Standing Committee to the Secretary – Helen Camm at [secretary.harrogatedeanery@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:secretary.harrogatedeanery@leeds.anglican.org)