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# VISION IN FOCUS

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## Introduction

This month we take a look at the stewardship branch of our diocesan vision and how we are committed to 'Living as thankful and generous people.'

So, stewardship is all about money right? Hmmm, think again! Yes, financial donations and contributions are important, but there are so many other gifts that people can offer as good stewards.

In this edition we celebrate the many gifts and talents that God has given us, including how pupils at Archbishop Rowan Williams Primary School are using their gifts to help others. Our new Church Resource Officer Zoe Ward reminds us what stewardship is and how she can help us all flourish as good stewards.

Archdeacon Ian Rees shares his thoughts on discipleship as the foundation for stewardship and we celebrate Lay Ministry, another very special gift! And if you want a place to start ..... The Big Help Out is a fantastic volunteering opportunity taking place across the UK on Monday (8th May) as part of the Coronation Weekend!

*Debra Goddard*  
*Diocesan Communications Officer*



The stewardship branch of our diocesan vision looks at different aspects of what this means...

- To teach and encourage a generous response to God's gifts, and share a message of God's unconditional and limitless love in all that we do
- To value people of all ages as our most precious assets; recognizing that all we have, and are, comes from God
- To appreciate that our church buildings can be a powerful tool for mission and welcome – as both sacred spaces and community spaces

- To develop an open, transparent, and generous approach to our finances

Let's have a look at how this is being developed across the diocese...

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## Discipleship as the foundation of stewardship

Join Archdeacon Ian Rees as he discusses why stewardship is an essential part of our discipleship.



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## What is stewardship?



Our new Church Resource Officer Zoe Ward shares her thoughts on what stewardship means to her and how she can help us to be the best stewards we can. She has plenty of tips and resources, so why not get in touch!

[zoeward@churchinwales.org.uk](mailto:zoeward@churchinwales.org.uk)

[01633267490](tel:01633267490) / [07951 970876](tel:07951970876)

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## Celebrating the gifts God has given us

***For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:21)***

Stewardship always feels difficult but it really shouldn't - what could be simpler than recognising all the gifts we have received from God and then choosing to offer back to him all that we have, freely, generously, and with gratitude?

When we speak in the language of gifts and celebrate all that we have, it's so much easier to share, to give back, and to encourage others to do the same. Stewardship is about sharing all that we have, gifts, talents, time, and money, recognising that they come from God and are his to use.

We have so many great assets, but let's just think about the three huge ones - God, people, and our buildings. Let's start with our buildings - people often speak of them as a problem and it is true that they cost a lot of money, but they are also highly identifiable, often stunning, and do give us a focus and a focal point in our communities. But do we make them sweat? Are we making the most of them, or are they simply used one hour a week for worship? How can we make them work better for us, be a real asset, and be used to glorify all of God's creation, not just when we worship him?



People - every single one of us is loved by God and he has bestowed upon us more gifts, skills, and talents than we can possibly use. But do we use any of them? How good are we at encouraging the gifts and talents that we see in others, and how willing are we to make a contribution to the life of our church and community, to use God's gifts for God, and to honour all that God has given us?

Finally, if we make sure that God is the first and the most important asset that we focus on then the rest will follow. God asks us to love him with all our heart and all our mind and all our soul.

What better way can we do that, than by acknowledging that all that we have is a gift from him, and as a result, thank him, by offering those gifts back to him, for his kingdom and glory, be it our talents, our time, our resources, our money, or our love. To thine be the glory, great things he hath done.

**Revd Sally Ingle-Gillis**

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## Lay ministry is a gift!

Life is hectic. It is messy and it is beautiful. We rush around trying to catch every moment and sometimes we are worn down, pulled in multiple directions and simply stretched too thin. There isn't enough of us to fulfil the multitude of calls on our time – through obligation, initiative or love; let alone time for peace. In this cacophony of demands, faith is such a blessing. We are privileged to hear one call above the rest. We come out of worship nourished and rejuvenated by time well spent in fellowship and prayer. But I encourage you to take a moment to consider if there is a further call from God to serve Him, your church and ministry area through engaging in lay ministry.



Some have written off lay ministry as a stepping stone to ordained ministry but this narrow lens completely misses the point. Lay ministry is a calling in its own right; and those that have already answered the nudge from God know its worth. Like ordained ministry, there are different forms of lay ministry. If you feel called to study theology deeply, to consider the word of God, and to preach then you may be interested in becoming a Licensed Lay Minister or LLM for short (historically

known as Readers). Perhaps you would like to take an active role in the ministry of your local area, bringing comfort to others and providing a link to the church for the sick or bereaved; or maybe you'd like to become involved in the formation of worship and support your ministry team in crafting services – the new Commissioned Lay Ministries of 'Pastoral Visitor' or 'Worship Leader' could be for you. You may feel called to step closer to the alter, to become part of the serving team during the Eucharist as a Licensed Eucharistic Assistant.

We already know the gifts we have received from opening our hearts to God and these only multiply as we answer His call and deepen our relationship with Him. Lay ministry offers us the chance to step forward and touch the hem of Christ's cloak; to be part of his transformative love. It is a gift to our ministry areas; providing extra support to our ministry teams and outreach to our communities. It is a gift to others; giving witness to those living out their faith in stewardship. And finally, it is a gift to you; strengthening the roots of your discipleship, growing your spirit, and revealing all that God calls you to be.

We will be hosting a **Celebration of Lay Ministry with Bishop Cherry on Wednesday 21st June at 7pm at St Mark's, Goldtops**. We would like to invite all those who are already involved, anyone that is considering the call, and anyone who simply wishes to show support to attend. Resources will be available which explain the different roles and pathways; along with refreshments. We will also be launching the new training programme for Commissioned Lay Ministry. We look forward to seeing you there!

**Zoe Ward, Church Resource Officer**

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**Give your time as a volunteer**



To mark His Majesty The King's Coronation thousands of organisations across the country are getting together to give us all the chance to help out in our own local communities.

Starting on Monday 8th May there will be opportunities for everyone to join in. No matter what you are good at, there'll be something to suit helping hands of all shapes and sizes!

From checking in on someone who'd like a bit of company or volunteering for a charity the more of us who join in, the bigger help we will be.

The Archbishop of Wales will be among thousands of volunteers across the UK taking part in the initiative on Monday.

Archbishop Andrew John will be doing a beach clean in North Wales to raise awareness of the impact of plastic pollution in our seas

The Big Help Out is one of the official projects of the upcoming Coronation Weekend.

It is a huge public engagement campaign to promote, champion and showcase volunteering on Monday 8 May and following on from that day.

In the UK, millions of people volunteer every day. The Big Help Out is trying to affect a step change in volunteering across the country by making it easy for volunteers to recognise opportunities and get involved. Building on the volunteering phenomenon seen during the pandemic, the Big Help Out aims to inspire a new generation of volunteers, particularly those from backgrounds who don't traditionally volunteer.

Given the importance of faith communities as sources of volunteering and charitable work in the UK and HM The King's longstanding commitment to promoting inter-faith collaboration, faith organisations are set to play a significant role in the Big Help Out.

The Archbishop's beach clean takes place at Dinas Dinlle beach in Caernarfon Bay between 10am-12.

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## Stewardship in schools

Being a good steward is all about helping others, something that the students of Archbishop Rowan Williams Primary School know all about.....



“At ARW Primary School building healthy, supportive relationships is something that our whole school community are continually striving for and our children show these attributes in an abundance.

“We are very lucky to have support from our local clergy across different Christian denominations who

regularly lead Collective Worships and support with a range of different activities e.g. Christian Union meetings, meditation, spiritual development etc to enhance building stronger, effective and supportive relationships within our local and wider community.

“The children have worked hard to build strong relationships with people in their community including the local houses developments by Lovell and Redrow, our local care home and their residents. Together they develop activities to support not only themselves, their peers, their families but also to anyone around them that they feel may benefit.

“Within these activities to support others, they have developed entrepreneurial , life saving, first aid and stewardship skills, to name but a few.

“Throughout work with our Archbishop Young Leaders Award children have been thinking about how they can support communities for the better. The award empowers young leaders to put the needs of others before themselves as displayed by Jesus and other faith leaders. They have really enjoyed the challenge of developing skills to support and enrich those around them.”





“The support and care they show to those around them are always so clear to see, here are some quotes from some of our older children:

*‘We went to Crick care home to allow the elders there to have company over the festive period, because some of them don’t see many people and we wanted to be kind and put a smile on their faces’.* **Indie Year 5**

*‘There was a lady that hadn’t smiled for a long time, but when we went to sing to them, she was joining in, clapping, dancing and smiling, which made me happy because it was lovely to see the smiles on their faces’.* **Eryn Year 5**



*‘I wrote a letter to Redrow, a local building company near our school, to help my class mates go on a residential trip to the Isle of Wight. I wanted to do this, because I knew it was expensive and that some may not be able to afford to come. I wanted to make sure all children could go on this trip because it would*

*be a great opportunity for team building, water confidence and independence of being away from home.'* **Ivy Year 6**

*'I am taking part in AYLA – young leaders award, I have decided to challenge myself to wash a neighbours car because I want to help people especially those around me, that would struggle more than others.'* **Erin Year 6**



*'We learnt life saving skills in class, I think this is important because if we see anyone around e.g in the streets is not very well, I will then have an understanding of what I could do to help. I would feel happy that I could help, if I couldn't help I was feel really guilty.'* **James Year 6**

*'I have built good, strong relationships with my neighbours, because we always help each other out. My sister and I help elderly neighbours, larger families and people that work long hours by helping them with their recycling and tidying around the cul-de-sac. I like to do this because it makes me feel good, knowing I have helped others. I know if we didn't help, they would have to do it late at night because they work so late and others would struggle without our help.'* **Henri Year 6**

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## Diocese of Monmouth · Esgobaeth Mynwy

Diocesan Office, 64 Caerau Road, Newport, NP20 4HJ  
01633 267490 · [monmouth.churchinwales.org.uk](http://monmouth.churchinwales.org.uk)

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