

To all Licensed Clergy, Clergy with PTO, Licensed Lay Ministers, PCC  
Secretaries and PCC Treasurers

Date: Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2025  
Our ref: MJS/jrp-bp5249

### Season of Creationtide

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

*"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."* (Matthew 5:9)

During this season of Creationtide, we join with Christians from around the globe to give thanks to God for the amazing world which we share, and to be inspired to nurture our shared environment. This Creationtide we are called to be peacemakers with creation, all people and God. This is a very significant part of our priorities as an Eco & Reconciling Diocese. Do see the current issue of the Prayer Diary for more information and ways to pray, as we enjoy and care for the beauty of all that we see around us.

### Prayers for Gaza

We would like to draw your attention to a call for prayer and fasting for the people of Gaza issued by a large group of charities including Christian Aid, Tearfund, Embrace the Middle East, Amos Trust, Sabeel-Kairos, Quakers in Britain, All We Can, Reconciling Leaders Network, Difference, Friends of the Holy Land, USPG, and the Centre for Missionaries from the Majority World. The request is to make Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September a particular focus for this.

You might like to use the prayer of The Most Reverend Dr. Hosam E. Naoum, Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem:

*Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world:*

*In your mercy, provide for all those in Gaza and beyond who suffer from hunger and starvation, that they may be given both physical bread to nourish their bodies and heavenly bread to sustain their souls.*

*By the power of your Spirit, bring a speedy end to this cruel war, the release of all captives, care for the sick and wounded, comfort for those who have lost loved-ones, and the opening of a pathway for a just and lasting peace here in the very homeland where your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, ministered during his earthly life; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*

*Amen*

You might also like to make use of the resources produced by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, available here: <https://ctbi.org.uk/news-and-events/middle-east-prayers/>

### Safeguarding Culture Survey

Attached to this letter you will find a summary of the report produced by Margaret Gildea following the focus groups and online survey that she conducted earlier this year regarding the culture of safeguarding in the diocese. Those who attended one of the focus groups will receive a copy of the full report. If others would like to see the full report, please contact the

Bishops' Office who will happily send it to you. Overall the report is positive and we are very grateful for all the feedback received. Margaret has presented this to the Bishop's Leadership Team for our learning and an action plan is being produced.

### **Independent HR Review**

Also attached to this letter is a summary of a report produced by an independent HR consultant regarding the diocese's response to the allegations regarding, and subsequent criminal conviction of, a former diocesan employee. The events were widely reported in the press (including a File on 4 radio programme in July) and we have submitted a serious incident report to the Charity Commissioners. If you have concerns about the report (or the safeguarding culture survey), please feel free to contact us. More generally, we would encourage anyone who has been affected by this to contact the [diocesan safeguarding team](#) or to call the Safe Spaces helpline on 0300 303 1056 or visit [www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk](http://www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk)

### **Minster Communities**

Recently, the trustees of the diocese signed off on proposals for the Soar Valley Minster Community (a group of parishes in and around Loughborough and the north of the diocese). This is our second formally constituted Minster Community (after Launde) and they are now moving into phase 3 of the process which involves appointments to the Ministry Team. We are delighted that these parishes have moved so quickly and enthusiastically towards working together in this way.

Over the next year or so, it is hoped that a further 18 Minster Communities will form (most are currently in phase 2 of the process). Not every parish has opted to be part of this process, and we know that there is considerable anxiety in some parts of the diocese. This is understandable and PCCs are of course completely free to make their own decisions regarding involvement. However, it is worth saying again (very briefly) why we are doing this:

1. **Greater support for isolated clergy and church officers** – we hope that the mutual support offered across parishes will make a real difference.
2. **Realism about finances** – we hope that a closer link between parish contributions and the deployment of stipendiary clergy will address our structural deficit (while we are seeing a slight increase in financial support from the national church, it is nowhere near enough to address our deficit).
3. **A greater focus on mission and serving our communities** – the process of Minster Community formation is focussed on how we best serve our communities and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And we hope that many more people will hear the call to ministry through this process.
4. **Closer working with the 23,000 children in church schools** – we hope that each Minster Community will have a minister focused on work with children and young people.

As part of the ongoing Minster Community process, we would like to invite all licensed clergy to meet with us on **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at St Martins House, 10am – 2pm**. This will be a simple conversation between us as bishops and those clergy who hold our licence, so that we can hear your questions and concerns, whilst continuing to journey together through

these major changes. In particular, we hope to explore how we envisage the Ministry Team working within Minster Communities, and how we will make appointments such as Intergenerational (Growing Faith) Ministers, Oversight Ministers and Focal Ministers.

There will be a chance, in advance of the gathering, to submit any questions that you would like addressed in the gathering. Information about this will be shared in due course, however, please can we ask that you [register your place here](#).

### **Finances**

Once again, we want to express our sincere thanks for the generous giving from so many people in the diocese. Even as we continue to face significant financial challenges in the diocese, we are mindful that every pound given represents an individual or family expressing their love for God and their support for God's church. We are very grateful.

We now have a new Parish Giving Officer, Laura Taylor. Please feel free to contact her for a conversation about running a giving campaign in your parish (we would expect every parish to be doing this annually as part of their wider teaching on discipleship) or promoting the Parish Giving Scheme <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/home/> This Scheme not only helps with regular giving but also ensures that a person's giving rises with inflation (without this, giving effectively drops each year).

### **Prayers of Love and Faith**

This Autumn, Diocesan Synod is devoting a whole meeting to discussing Prayers of Love and Faith. As you will know, I, Martyn, resigned from the role of leading this process nationally earlier this year, but we remain fully committed to finding a way forward for our diocese, within which there are differing views which we know are held with sincere conviction. Please continue to pray for this process.

### **Please note the following dates for your diary:**

- **Bishop of Leicester's Chaplaincy Lectures 2025** – Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October 5.30pm - 7pm – Loughborough University. The lecture will be given by the Professor Lord Tarassenko entitled 'Will we still need God when we reach Artificial General Intelligence?' Professor Lord Tarassenko currently serves as a cross-bench peer in the House of Lords, President of Reuben College, Oxford, and a lay canon at Christ Church, Oxford. Through his academic background in biomedical engineering, he has become a world-leading expert in applying machine learning (one of the foundations of AI) to healthcare. Artificial Intelligence is already reshaping the landscape in which we work, serve, learn and worship - Lord Tarassenko's lecture will equip us to think about its implications for our mission and ministry. [Booking details can be found here](#).

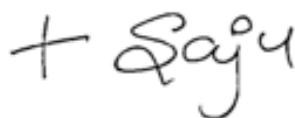
- **Bishops' Study Day for Clergy & Lay Ministers** – Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November St Martins House, 9.30am to 4pm. The next Bishops' Study Day on the theme of preaching well. We are delighted to say that the Bishop of Horsham, Ruth Bushyager, will be leading the day, which will also include some workshops. [Please book here](#).
- **Bishops' Study days in 2026** will be taking place on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May and Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November.
- **Bishops' Retreat Days** – there are limited spaces still available to clergy and lay ministers for the retreat days at Launde Abbey. On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October and Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November, for more information or to book your place, please contact our office on [Bishops.office@leicestercofe.org](mailto:Bishops.office@leicestercofe.org) or 0116 2708985.

As always, we continue to pray and give thanks for you and your ministry.

Yours in Christ,



The Rt Revd Martyn Snow  
Bishop of Leicester



The Rt Revd Saju Muthalaly  
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