



Confronting a Crisis

The Church is in an existential crisis.

It is a crisis of Money, with most dioceses facing acute financial pressures.

It is a crisis of Ministry, with new vocations less than half of what will be needed for future vacancies.

It is a crisis of Reputation, with safeguarding scandals at the highest level being played out publicly, despite robust local procedures.

It is a crisis of Authority, with the role of Bishops being widely discredited though their creating a deep divide in the church by promoting the PLF project.

It is a crisis of Mission, with the C of E reaching less than 3% of our communities in usual Sunday worship.

It is a crisis of our Unity, where people are polarised on key issues and fellowship is being impaired, trust has broken down, and there is more working against others than working with them.

It is a crisis of Faith, when in the face of everything else, the last House of Bishops day-long meeting ([NB HERE](#)) didn't acknowledge or address any of those other crises—something I pointed out in a speech there using these exact examples. Nor was there any call to repentance or prayer, despite many heightened emotions.

It is not unusual for people in a crisis to go into denial, to try to carry on as though everything is normal (Jer.6:14). It is not unusual for people in a crisis to be more concerned for themselves than others (Ezek.34:9). It is not unusual for people to control their inner anxieties by becoming more controlling of the external things they have responsibility for, to further their own ends (Ezek.34:1-5).

But the hardest thing to do in a crisis is what the Scriptures call us to... public prayerful repentance. What makes it hard is that the repentance is not for their own sin or because they caused the crisis, but for those who are part of God's people, yet are still unrepentant and part of the problem!

IN THIS EDITION

- Continuing our response to the Makin Review, we have 3 pages on Coercive Control.
- Michael Hayden updates us from General Synod.
- And don't miss the "Fridge Door" with important info on getting your voice heard re the next ++Canterbury.

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Rt Rev Rob Munro
Bishop of Ebbsfleet

Praying for
revival...

Esther

3¹³ Dispatches were sent ...with the order to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews ...4¹ When Mordecai learned of all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city, wailing loudly and bitterly.

2 Chronicles (Hezekiah)

29³ In the first month of the first year of his (Hezekiah) reign, he opened the doors of the temple and repaired them... Consecrate yourselves now and consecrate the temple of the Lord... ¹⁰I intend to make a covenant with the Lord the God of Israel, so that his fierce anger will turn away from us.

Daniel

9⁴ I prayed to the Lord and confessed: O Lord the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with all who love him and obey his commands, we have sinned and done wrong; we have been wicked and have rebelled, we have turned away from your commands and laws; we have not listened to your servants the prophets...

2 Chronicles (Solomon)

7¹⁴ if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Why did they do that...?

What strikes me is that while Scriptures speak repeatedly against guilt by association, as though a person's ministry will be corrupted if you associate with those who are sinners—which of course was what the Pharisees found so scandalous in Jesus— *'a friend of tax-collectors and sinners'*; nevertheless Scripture calls us to focus our prayers and our service on grace by association!

The OT is permeated by the expansive blessings of God's people. It is the purpose for which God calls Abraham—the blessing of the nations. It is repeatedly punctuating the OT narrative, as Matthew's genealogy famously highlights—Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, women 'outsiders' who find through faith grace that brings them into God's people. And there are even men too, like Naaman.

Of course, supremely Jesus identifies with his people, all sinners in our rebellion, associating fully with them, as his baptism signified, and dying for them as their substitute. It is by his association with us that we receive his grace to save us.

But it is because of this grace by association that the saints of old faced crises on their knees—not for themselves, but for their people, the community around them, sometimes even for those who at the time opposed them. It has been one of the common threads in every documented revival—God's people taking ownership not only of their own sins, but the sinfulness of the community around, whom they are called to serve.

What if the state of the Church is our fault?

Because whether you accept that the outward covenant sign of baptism unites us, even with those disobedient in the church, or you accept that the secularisation of our nation has accelerated in our lifetime, on our watch, it is true that in the eyes of the unbelieving world we are all associated together. And if that is true, there will be no ultimate blessing of us unless we are deeply concerned for the blessing of all those who are identified with us.

So our crisis may not really be what others have done: with bishops in manipulating processes, liberals in denying biblical truths, dioceses wasting precious resources, It may be what we have done: by asserting our superiority or soundness, distancing ourselves from others for their sins while forgetting we ourselves are sinners, keeping the financial fruit of our worship, assuming it is 'our money' to decide on, not with the self-sacrificial generosity of God.

What if the faithfulness God is seeking from us is a grace by association: to love our persecutors by doing more than they demand to bless them (Mat.5:39-42), to serve others in sacrificial generosity (2Cor.8:1-5); to overcome evil by the good we do to them (Rom.12:20-21). What if God doesn't want us to feel sorry for ourselves, but desperately sorry for those whose opposition and indifference leaves out of the covenant of grace (Luke 19:41-42).

That's why we should not expect a reversal in the crisis until we undergo a reversal ourselves, until we are ready to seek God for grace in our association with others. We will only really believe we need revival when we are so moved by the state our church and nation under God's judgement, that we cannot help ourselves but pray for them.

Are there signs of this?

Search your heart. The much-quoted, rarely practiced, promise of 2 Chron.7:14 says: *If my people, called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.* To be humbled so as to pray for grace for others—for the desire to bless others, to share grace by association with even those who oppose us—that is the humility that seeds revival. And maybe that crisis is the source of all the rest! The Church of Jesus Christ is not here for us, despite that so much of our energy and angst is focussed on the crises that touch us. We are here for others, and Jesus is still praying for us to get that! (John 17:20-23)

General Synod: The highlights



*Michael Hayden,
Chaplain to the
Bishop of Ebbsfleet*

The General Synod has just finished its February group of sessions. We are already seeing much reporting in the media, particularly around the discussions concerning safeguarding. There will be much more to say and much more to think about in the coming weeks and months. For now, however, here are the highlights.

Safeguarding

The Synod was given a choice between two models of safeguarding going forwards. The first would transfer the National Safeguarding Team into a new, independent scrutiny body. The second would do that and also set up a new, independent delivery body to employ the Diocesan and Cathedral Safeguarding Officers across the whole Church of England. Arguments were presented for both sides, and it was hard to know which Synod was going to go for. The Bishop of Blackburn had tabled an amendment, dubbed 'Model 3.5'. His idea was that, if everyone agrees that independent scrutiny is needed, then we can agree that and get on with it while we work out if the more radical Model 4 (independent delivery of safeguarding) is even deliverable.

It was a compromise and Synod adopted it. That doesn't mean that we won't end up with fully independent delivery of safeguarding services—it just means that there may be additional steps in getting there.

Also high on the safeguarding agenda was changing the rules around safeguarding risk assessments for clergy. After the Blackburn Cathedral situation, it will now be easier to initiate such a risk assessment if a bishop or DSO has concerns.

Synod also approved new Safeguarding Codes of Practice. The more important of these, the Managing Allegations Code of Practice, places an obligation on clergy, bishops, lay readers, and other 'relevant persons' to report any safeguarding concerns or allegations to the relevant authority. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

Crown Nominations Commission

The Bishops brought proposals to change how the Crown Nominations Commission works. Some of these were uncontroversial, such as providing an interpreter for those who require one. Synod was happy to agree to those. Others, however, such as giving the chairing archbishop a second vote to break a deadlock, or lowering the threshold for a nomination, were much more controversial, and it was the House of Laity who were instrumental in pushing back.

Working Class Vocations

There was a Private Member's Motion seeking to encourage more vocations and ordinations from working-class people. The Bishop of Chester, as Chair of the Ministry Development Board, accepted the challenge and the Board will work on a strategy.

National Church Governance

A huge piece of legislation is making its way through the Synod process to streamline the National Church Institutions (NCIs). The idea is to combine the separate NCIs into one national charity. It won't change much for churches and people on the ground, but among those who interact with the NCIs it is being heralded as a good thing.

Mission and Pastoral Measure

The Mission and Pastoral Measure (MPM) is one of the most consequential pieces of legislation for the Church of England on the ground. The new Measure hopes to make it simpler and easier to understand when it comes to things like changing parish boundaries, combining parishes into benefices, closing churches, and deploying clergy. There have been concerns for many years that these matters have been stacked in the favour of the diocese. It is hoped that this will allow for a reset in the relationship, giving more power to parishes.

As part of our practical follow-up to the Makin Review, this month we're following up on one of the challenging areas of the Review, addressed by recommendations 17.1.1– 17.1.10—Abuses of Power by those in positions of Trust.

Specifically the recommendation says "That the following learning is included in Safeguarding training, policy/procedure and guidance:

- signs of abuse of power by those in positions of trust
- amendment to the Sexual Offences Act 2003 in 2022 to expand "Position of Trust" offences to include anyone who is coaching, teaching, training, supervising, or instructing in a religion
- how 'status related' systems, cultures and practices can enable perpetrators to abuse their power
- the negative impact of victim blaming language and behaviour in terms of safeguarding all at risk of harm, and
- the impact of adultifying children, and use of adultifying language, erasing childhood vulnerability and their rights as a child.

- safeguarding statutory guidance, and associated legislation takes prime place in the ordering of decision-making and actions to stop and prevent abuse.
- risks specific to religious organisations in terms of exploitation of theology, grooming and sexual abuse, including dangers of social media.

This article extracts parts of the C of E safeguarding training on spiritual abuse

found [HERE](#)

Concerned about coercion?

One of the common features in recent scandals highlighted by the 31:8 report, the Makin Review, and the Scolding report is the part that unaccountable charismatic influential leadership can be used to control and coerce people. All leadership involves influencing people, and there are many and healthy ways that a godly influence can be transformative in the lives of others. However when the power to influence or to direct people is misused it can do great harm.



Jesus teaching on leadership in Matthew 23:1-12 or Mark 9:35 makes the radical claim that great leadership must be characterised by humble service, in contrast to secular assumptions that leadership is about power and control, asserting your will. However given the radical corruption of our sin, the claim to be doing the former can sometimes be used to disguise the latter.

Coercive control in the context of leadership is understood as a form of 'spiritual abuse', which is not a separate abuse category, but simply a particular form of emotional and psychological abuse occurring in a religious context. It shares some of the hallmarks of bullying and harassment, including intimidation, manipulation and inducing fear. However, what makes this distinct are the elements associated with religious belief including coercion through religious position, membership of the religious community, scripture, biblical discourse and spiritual threats. To be told something is 'God's will', or that you might 'harm the church's reputation', by a leader in a position of power or responsibility adds an extra dimension to coercive relationships.

We all experience a spectrum of behaviours in Christian contexts. At one end there is good, healthy, nurturing behaviour in which people flourish and grow, and there are many examples of this in our communities. Sometime we experience unhelpful behaviour. This is where someone's reaction/behaviour is not harmful but not helpful and we all behave in this way at times. If we start to see a consistent pattern of behaviour that is negative, where we check ourselves before approaching that person; where they are not open to question etc., it starts to become unhealthy and much of the behaviour that concerns us sits here. It can often be challenged and addressed at this stage. If it becomes a persistent pattern of coercive controlling behaviour that reflects the definition of psychological abuse with a religious rationale, it can cross the threshold into spiritual abuse.

What are the symptoms to watch out for? These are the worked examples from the [C of E Training](#) on this.



Example 1 Financial Coercion	Teaching about financial giving in a way that allows understanding of biblical passages and discipleship. Accepting that some will be more able than others to give financially.	Suggesting that most people could give more if they managed their finances more effectively. Being overly defensive when speaking to someone who has a different opinion to you on tithing.	Pressuring individuals or groups into financial giving. Giving more attention to individuals who are able to give financially. Developing a pattern of defensive and critical conversations with individuals who are unable to give financially.	Consistent, intrusive, coercive requests for financial giving, suggesting that the level of giving is the most important measure of the individual's commitment to God. The use of biblical scripture to persistently coerce financial giving or using threats of spiritual consequences to invoke fear if finance is not provided.
Response required	Affirm good practice 	If this is a one-off situation, it could be that a little extra pastoral support is needed, or some help with capability. The response required will in part depend on whether the individual appreciates that their behaviour was unhelpful in that situation. If they don't, this would be a warning flag which might trigger a more robust response (see next column).	More robust, formal intervention, would be needed at this stage to help the individual move back down the spectrum and prevent them moving forward. This might include closer supervision, re-training on safeguarding or disagreeing well, coaching, mentoring or counselling.	A persistent pattern of such behaviour would constitute spiritual abuse. If this was towards a child of vulnerable adult, this would be a safeguarding matter. 

Characteristics of a healthy Christian culture

They include a culture in which:

- There is genuinely open dialogue, positive encouragement and active welcoming of different perspectives / views.
- All are valued, respected and nurtured, no-one is isolated or excluded.
- Harmful behaviour, e.g. bullying, can be (and is) challenged by anyone.
- Power is distributed, not vested in one or two individuals or groups.
- Self-reflection in each member is promoted.
- Safeguarding is foundational and actively promoted, preventative and responsive processes in place.
- Survivors are heard, supported and responded to.

What do I do if I identify Coercive Concerns?






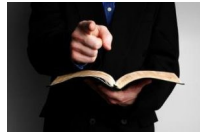
1. Behaviour that could be categorised as 'spiritual abuse' must be reported to your church safeguarding officer or the DSO. They will advise on what to do next.

2. 'Unhealthy' behaviour should be raised with the wardens and those with spiritual oversight of the person concerned — for a church member, that is an incumbent; for a church minister that would be an Archdeacon or +Ebbsfleet

3. Unhelpful behaviour can be addressed with another member of church leadership or a trusted friend. It is best not done alone. If this is then ignored, it is likely to become 'unhealthy'

Concerned about coercion? Part 2

Healthy → Unhelpful → Unhealthy → Spiritual Abuse

Example 2 Response to Questions about Teaching or Policy	<p>All individuals in the congregation are able to question, discuss and respectfully challenge messages that are shared and how things are done.</p>	<p>Being overly defensive when asked a question or being challenged respectfully.</p> <p>Not actively listening to a concern.</p> 	<p>Developing a pattern of defensive and aggressive responses to any question or challenge.</p> <p>Creating a culture in which challenge and questioning are seen as threatening unity.</p> <p>Regularly suggesting that anyone raising an issue is themselves the issue.</p>	<p>A consistent pattern of controlling behaviour suggesting that questioning or challenge is an inability to be obedient to God and a reflection of a problematic personal faith.</p> <p>Seeking to use Scripture or spiritual threats to close down discussion or silence an individual rather than to engage with the issues they are raising.</p>
Response required	<p>Affirm good practice</p> 	<p>If this is a one-off situation, it could be a little extra pastoral support is needed, or some help with capability.</p> <p>The response required will in part depend on whether the individual appreciates that their behaviour was unhelpful in that situation. If they don't, this would be a warning flag which might trigger a more robust response (see next column)</p>	<p>More robust, formal intervention would be needed at this stage to help the individual move back down the spectrum and prevent them moving forward.</p> <p>This might include closer supervision, re-training on safeguarding or disagreeing well, coaching, mentoring or counselling.</p>	<p>A persistent pattern of such behaviour would constitute spiritual abuse. If this was towards a child of vulnerable adult, this would be a safeguarding matter.</p> 
Example 3 Mentoring or pastoral support of others	<p>Offering spiritual mentorship and support, which is mutually beneficial with agreed boundaries.</p> <p>Aiming to be self-reflective & self-aware about one-to-one pastoral conversations.</p> <p>Being aware of the likely power imbalance in a pastoral mentoring relationship.</p> <p>Possibly having confidential supervision for one-to-one pastoral conversations, or 'checking in' with a third party confidentially about these.</p>	<p>Being a little too directive in one mentorship conversation.</p> <p>Being overly defensive when one piece of advice is disagreed with or ignored.</p> 	<p>Requiring the individual to share personal details which they do not wish to share. Going beyond agreed boundaries.</p> <p>Spiritual mentorship or support becoming very directive and difficult to disagree with or not comply with.</p> <p>Exploring and interpreting personal psychological history to a depth appropriate to a trained counsellor or psychotherapist.</p>	<p>Consistent pattern of highly controlling and directive mentorship.</p> <p>Use of scripture to control behaviour consistently.</p> <p>Using God's name to enforce actions the mentor recommends.</p> <p>Making someone feel unable or afraid to disagree with any advice given.</p> <p>Presenting oneself as akin to a professional counsellor, anointed by God for this role, with equivalent skills and competencies.</p>
Response required	<p>Affirm good practice</p> 	<p>If this is a on- off situation, it could be that a little extra pastoral support is needed, or some help with capability.</p> <p>The response required will in part depend on whether the individual appreciates that their behaviour was unhelpful in that situation. If they don't, this would be a warning flag which might trigger a more robust response (see next column)</p>	<p>More robust, formal intervention would be needed at this stage to help the individual move back down the spectrum and prevent them moving forward.</p> <p>This might include, closer supervision, re-training on safeguarding or disagreeing well, coaching, mentoring or counselling.</p>	<p>A persistent pattern of such behaviour would constitute spiritual abuse. If this was towards a child of vulnerable adult, this would be a safeguarding matter.</p> 
Example 4 Clergy workload	<p>Checking to see if a member of the clergy is OK.</p> <p>Ensuring the member of clergy has protected time to rest</p>	<p>Scheduling a regular meeting on a day that should be the clergy members day off</p>	<p>Persistently undermining a member of the clergy privately and publicly including commenting on their working hours as a means of undermining them</p>	<p>Consistently using passages of scripture for example on servant leadership to control and undermine a member of the clergy and to exploit them in demanding excessive working hours with the rhetoric that this is required by God</p>
Response required	<p>Affirm good practice.</p>	<p>Take advice from Area Dean</p>	<p>Request formal support from a senior colleague</p>	<p>Consider escalating to Bishop, Archdeacon, or HR for intervention</p>

Concerned about coercion? Part 3

Some of the worked examples may raise detailed questions about what is or is not appropriate in different contexts. In cases of doubt, it is vital that the issues are discussed collectively with other leaders, or with those in oversight of a role. Sometimes habits develop over time that are unhealthy, but none are beyond repentance and biblical change.

Some issues may need external support to help address them. Particularly in relationships between staff members. Where these cannot be resolved with suitable mediation internally, most dioceses now have a 'evaluative' referral process, where a trained mediator/counsellor can come and help assess a situation, and make recommendations. This is distinct from any 'Clergy Discipline Measure' process (which is more 'judicial' in nature). This can even be used for self-referral in the case of a person feeling unjust allegations of unhelpful or unhealthy behaviour are being made. Further advice on this can be given confidentially from the +Ebbsfleet Team.

Finally, there are some excellent tools available to help churches where unhealthy cultures have developed, to develop better practices. [The Principles for Commending Ministry](#) document remains a helpful resources for PCCs and Leadership teams to help evaluate Church culture. Of particular relevance is the recommended "reviewing of church culture" using the CEEC resources (available from the [CEEC website](#)) and also "signposting safe pathways for raising concerns" including adopting a transparent whistle-blowing policy and appropriate signage supporting it, which are available from the "Connect" — "Download Resources" tab on the website.

2 Corinthians 4:1–7

¹ Since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. ² Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. ³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. ⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

'Nothing justifies violence or coercion.'

Christian relationships are to be marked by love, gentleness and respect.'

Archbishop of Sydney, Kanishka Raffel

Finally, beyond Jesus' own articulation of the priority of servant ministry, Paul in 2 Cor.4 sounds the death-knell to any leadership that seeks to coerce others:

Any real Christian leadership is:

1. A gift of mercy, not a right v.1
2. A renunciation of secret and shameful ways (the hallmarks of coercion) v.2
3. A proclamation of God's Word not our will, requiring plain undistorted truth-telling v.2b, not manipulation of others.
4. A revelation of Jesus—he is our glory v.3-4, so we exhibit Christ-like behaviour in sacrificial service.
5. A serving of others, not a ruling of them v.5, because we know we are fragile, flawed and failing jars of clay v.7, but showing and sharing Jesus' light.

It is our shame that within the Church and particularly within churches of our Network, coercive and manipulative behaviour has been exhibited. The wider church, and even the collective behaviour of the Bishops are not immune from criticism either, but there can be no place for it in a Christ-led community. So let us do all we can to repent and renew our fellowship in the light and godliness of Christ our Saviour and Lord.

What are key characteristics of spiritual abuse?

- Misusing scripture to coerce behaviour. Biblical messages of submission, sacrifice, obedience and forgiveness can be distorted to manipulate, control.
- Coercing by censorship – Pressuring people to secrecy and silence. People may feel unable to ask questions, disagree or raise issues, sometimes associated with the need to keep unity or protect the individual, Church or God.
- Requiring unquestioning obedience – with an implicit or explicit suggestion that this equates to obedience to God.
- Forced conformity—Using a sense of divine position to exert pressure to conform and suggesting this position is unchallengeable.
- Enforced accountability – being required to be accountable to another without consent, and without choice and control over boundary setting in the relationship. There are times when accountability is required (eg a safeguarding agreement), but these are enacted in accordance with CoFE policies, procedures, and practice guidance and not as a punishment.
- Exclusion or isolation as a punishment for non-compliance – An individual may be isolated from others due to perceived non-conformity or disobedience.
- Publicly shaming & humiliating individuals in order to control their behaviour – Individual/s may experience public shaming and humiliation because of a perceived lack of obedience or conformity.
- Threats of spiritual consequences – This may include exercising control through threats of spiritual consequences for non-compliance with personal directives.
- Inappropriate mentoring relationships. The misuse of the pastoral relationship in such a way that the mentor does not hold appropriate boundaries, and justifies this by theology, scripture or by claiming special spiritual insight or divine sanction.



Stand in one Spirit! Strive for one Gospel!

Reviving gospel ministry



Ebbsfleet Network Conferences 2025

*....know that you stand firm in the one Spirit,
striving together as one for the faith of the gospel (Philippians 1:27)*

The Network Conferences are each open to anyone, but we are suggesting dates in regions to enable local fellowship.

You need to book for free lunch, by clicking the relevant date below

Mon 28 April

St Andrew's, Leyland
[Northwest & MidWest]

Tue 29 April

Christ Church, Fulwood
[North & NorthEast]

Tue 6 May

Christ Church, Cambridge
[East & East Midlands]

Tue 13 May

All Souls, Langham Place
S London, South & SouthWest

Thu 15 May

All Souls, Langham Place
N London & beyond

Stand in one Spirit! Strive for one Gospel!

What we really need for the Church of England is not more successful politics, but REVIVAL!

That undeserved grace of God cannot be demanded, engineered or manipulated, but it can be prepared and prayed for. The 2025 Ebbsfleet Network conferences hope to help do that for us personally, in the greater accountability and complementarity of our ministries and in growing the resilience of our faith for what God may choose to do with us. There will time for interaction and questions, fellowship and prayer.

We hope churches will bring their leadership teams together, but anyone else is also welcome!

Content and Timetable

10.30am	Introductions and Opening Praise & Prayer (Arrivals & refreshments from 10am)	
10.45am	Session 1 – Revive our hearts! <i>Standing firm, Striving Together</i> (Rt Rev Dr Rob Munro—Bishop of Ebbsfleet)	
11.30am	Session 2 – Revive our faith! - <i>Standing firm with real accountability</i> (Rev Mike Warren – Chair of Biblical Counselling UK)	
12.am	Ebbsfleet News & Network Updates	
12.30am	FREE LUNCH but note you will need to register to get one!	
1.30pm	Opening praise & prayer	
1.45pm	Session 3 – Revive our ministries! - <i>Standing in one Spirit in complementarian ministry</i> (Ebbsfleet Advisors for Women—Annabel Heywood & Eleanor Hayden in Conversation with various Church leaders)	 
2.30pm	Session 4 – Revive our Church! - <i>Striving together for the faith of the gospel</i> (Rev Dr Lee Gatiss – Director of Church Society)	
3.15pm	Session 5 – Revive us all! - <i>Standing together unafraid of opposition</i> Open Questions & Reflections on our current situation (PLF, post-Makin, etc)	
3.45pm	Closing comments & prayer	

Bishop's Diary

December

- 10 Ministry call
St James, Audley PCC mtg
- 13 Ministry Zoom call
- 15 Confirmations, Holy Trinity,
West Bromwich
- 19 House of Bps mtg
Manchester diocese mtg
Ministry lunch
Christmas Break

January

- 5 Confirmation & Baptism,
St Nicholas, Stevenage
- 5-6 Evangelical Bps Conference
- 7 Ministry Zoom calls
Bp Chelmsford mtg
- 8 CEEC Zoom mtg
- 9 Ministry Zoom call
- 12 Service, High Halstow & St Mary, Hoo
Ministry mtg
- 13 Team Zoom mtg
- 14 Diocesan Finances Zoom mtg
- 15 GAFCON prayer Zoom
- 16 FWS Council Zoom mtg
Parish shortlisting mtg
- 17 Ministry mtg
- 19 Confirmations, St Thomas, Oakwood
Confirmation & Baptism,
Christ Church, North Finchley
- 20 House of Bishops
- 21-23 CEEC Residential
- 24 Ministry Zoom calls
- 27 Ministry Zooms & mtgs
- 28-29 College of Bps Residential
- 29 Canterbury College of Canons
- 30 Ministry mtgs & calls
- 31 Alliance mtg

February

- 2 Ordination at Christ Church,
Cambridge
- 3 Standing Commission Zoom
- 3-5 FWS Conference
- 6 HAB Licensing, Bath & Wells diocese
Ministry call & Church Society Zoom
- 7 Trinity Church, Buxton Trustees Zoom
Ministry Zooms
- 9 Service, St James, Audley
- 11 General Synod
Ministry mtgs
- 12 Ministry Zoom mtgs
Trinity Church, Buxton Recruitment
- 13 Ministry Zooms
- 16 Service, St John's, Over
- 17 Team & Ministry Zoom mtgs
Planning mtg
- 18 GAFCON Zoom
- 19 Ministry mtg

Coming up...

- 21 Day at Oak Hill College
- 21-23 N Essex ReNew Church weekend
- 23 Confirmations, St Michael's Braintree
- 26 Ebbsfleet Bishop's Council

Network Networking

As part of supporting Churches and dealing with issues, here are a couple of networking opportunities — "ZOOM Chats"

The new time for a regular monthly Ebbsfleet Virtual Coffee is every **FIRST TUESDAY** of a month from 10am-noon

So the next one will be Tuesday 4th March 2025 and you can join with [this Zoom link](#)

It will be open for people to come and go as they want, and bring whatever questions would be useful. Come and join us!

+Ebbsfleet Arrangements

Since the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, questions arise about how my role relates to others now and in the future. Solutions are still being worked out but in short for now...

1. In Canterbury Diocese I am already licenced as a Suffragan Bishop and available to provide episcopal care at the request of +Dover, so resolution churches should refer those to her.
2. Currently, although my episcopal ministry itself is not dependent on others, administrative oversight of my role defaults to ++York, although this has yet to be formally organised.
3. If the next ++Canterbury is a woman, arrangements are not clear. While the legal title of my suffragan role might remain, I would not be able to function credibly under the spiritual oversight of a woman Archbishop. A legal provision to transfer such authority would be necessary for me to continue in my calling. This has been now noted but not yet resolved formally.



Ebbsfleet Women

Join our monthly ZOOM Chat & Pray

This new initiative is open to any complementarian woman in a Church of England church, and is an opportunity to share encouragements and challenges, ask questions, share concerns and then pray about what we discuss.

No need to sign up, just 'drop-in' using [this Zoom link](#)

We have selected different times of day and days of the week for the first 3 months, and hope that we can meet some of you then.

The times and dates are:

- > March Thu 20 6.30pm
- > April Wed 23 2pm
- > May Mon 19 10am

Bring others you think would be interested, and encourage people to sign up via the newsletter link, and write to Annabel or Eleanor to let us know.

We look forward to connecting with you,

Annabel and Eleanor.



Ebbsfleet Women Update

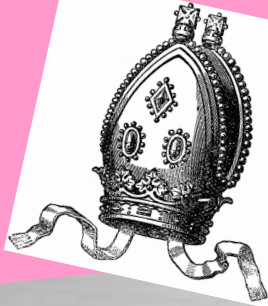
We are sorry to announce that for health reasons, Dr Ros Clarke is stepping back from her role as an Ebbsfleet Pastoral Advisor for women. She is still actively involved in the Priscilla Course and has made some fantastic contributions to the Network over the last year. Thanks Ros!





Trust Safeguarding

[Follow this link to find out more](#)



ARE YOU A RESOLUTION PARISH WHERE
+ROB HAS NOT VISITED RECENTLY?
WE'RE ABOUT TO FINALISE +ROB'S
ITINERARY FOR THE AUTUMN & HE'D
LOVE TO INCLUDE YOUR CHURCH IF
POSSIBLE. DROP AN EMAIL TO STEVE:
ADMIN@BISHOPOFEBBSFLEET.ORG
... & WE'LL FIT YOU IN IF WE CAN



One of the issues recently highlighted by the Makin Review and Scolding Report has been concern when leaders of churches function without well-informed support from others. Churchwardens have a legal role to provide a level of oversight already, so it is important that they have access to both the resources of the +Ebbsfleet Network, but also have access directly to the ministry of the +Ebbsfleet. The easiest way to do that is to make sure they are signed up!

You can check that by signing in on "My Churchsuite" and on the right hand menu select "Search for Others". If their names are not listed, please encourage them to sign up via the website on the [CONNECT](#) tab.

For the same reasons, it would be good to ensure all your key leadership team are also connected to the network!

Thanks for checking and for your help in sorting this out

2024 Ebbsfleet Roadshows:

Audio sessions are available, [here](#)

The *Positive Ministry Relationships* resource is available [here](#)

[illegible]

Find us:



Vacancies February 2025

- [Rector](#)
St Thomas, Edinburgh
- [Associate Vicar](#)
- [Assistant Minister: Youth & Children](#)
Hailsham Parish Church
- [Church Planter](#)
St John's, Tunbridge Wells
- [Children's Worker](#)
St Mary's, Basingstoke
- [Children & Families Worker](#)
St George's Dagenham
- [Youth & Community Worker](#)
St George's, Wembdon

We are very happy to publicise vacancies to our network.

If possible please send a link to a web page rather than an advert or job description, to admin@bishopofebbsfleet.org thanks!

Giving a clear indication of closing dates helps us remove adverts in a timely manner.

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& Rev'd James Durbin (volunteer)
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If you wish to unsubscribe from our newsletter, please email
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Press here to join the Ebbsfleet Network

Sign up for our bi-monthly free newsletters and to
access support and advice from the Ebbsfleet Team