

 Diocese of Chester

archdeacons' visitation news

Dear Churchwardens



Has the Church in this country ever experienced a year like 2020? Has there ever been a harder time to be a Churchwarden? Many of our churches have seen income decimated, mission and ministry has been on hold, and trauma and anxiety about the future is not too far under the service. But, in the midst of the

challenges, churches have discovered new ways to be Church, many have jumped years of technical advancement, lots of folk have been at the heart of the community response to COVID and the mission of the Church has reached out in unexpected and exciting ways.

We would especially want to pay tribute to the amazing way that parishes have continued to pay parish share. This has meant some extraordinary efforts and some deeply sacrificial responses, for which we are deeply and humbly grateful. Without wishing to tempt fate, it feels like the worst of the storm has been weathered and calmer waters lie ahead. The fantastic story of the calming of the storm in Matthew 8:24-27 comes to mind. As Jesus and the disciples sailed across Galilee, a furious storm blows up and Jesus remains steadfastly asleep, whilst the disciples do what they can to stay afloat. At times it has felt like we've been racing around deck doing all we can to stop this ship from sinking and the rebuke always comes from Jesus, 'You of little faith, why are you so afraid?' There has been fear about how we cope, and you may still feel that, but storms pass and perhaps our call is to learn that whatever happens, we are still in God's hands – why be afraid?

As our churches seek to respond to the calmer sea, opportunities will arise to reach out and speak to our communities recovering from trauma. There will be people who need love, support and time to be listened to. We need to be ready to give that support, to look for the damaged and broken in our towns and villages, to encourage the small businesses in our high streets and the exhausted heroes of our NHS.

Storms will continually come our way and, as Churchwardens, you may well be more aware than most of the effects that will have on church life, but don't be afraid. Perhaps practically it is a moment to thank Ecclesiastical, who have provided this newsletter and who are often there for the Church in the storms as a visual demonstration of the support God has provided his Church. But never forget that as you allow Jesus to be real and present in your lives by faith, somehow storms don't hold the fear they might, because whatever happens we are still in God's hands – why be afraid?



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None of us can ignore the risk of cyber-attack (as much as we may want to!)

Cyber risk is real and attacks are significantly increasing in frequency. It is estimated around 80% of attacks can be prevented or mitigated by basic risk management practices that we could all be doing with little effort or cost.

Everyone faces risks

Most cyber-attacks are 'scatter gun'. Cyber criminals don't care who you are until they know whether they can get through your defences. They may be sending out millions of emails a day to target victims. These emails don't discriminate between a corporate CEO, volunteer in your church or an Archdeacon. Follow a link in one of those emails... and suddenly your cyber threat becomes real. Your attacker will want to know all about you now – and how they can exploit or steal from you and the people whose information you hold!

Understand what is most important to you and why

What would happen if someone stole all the personal data you hold about staff, volunteers and the vulnerable people you support? What if abusive messages were sent to those people from somebody posing as your church? Or if those people had their bank accounts hacked because you lost control of their personal information? What if your organisational accounts, records and files were irreversibly corrupted by a computer virus?

Think about the worst ways that your church, diocese or cathedral could be compromised by a cyber-attack and then work backwards to minimise your risks and protect your finances, reputation and operational capacity. It's not a cheerful task, but it is necessary.

Get the basics right with these five free and easy things you can do

These five simple steps from the National Cyber Security Centre (www.ncsc.gov.uk) will go a long way to protecting you from cyber-attack... and they won't cost a penny:

1. Use firewalls to secure your Internet connections from potential threat
2. Ensure all devices (computers, laptops, tablets and phones) have the most secure settings enabled
3. Use passwords for every device and change them regularly
4. Control access to your information; discriminate between general access for staff and volunteers, and restricted administrative access with password protection
5. Install updates as soon as you receive them. Manufacturers send you updates to protect you from the latest vulnerabilities they've discovered – don't ignore them!

You can download more guidance on how you can protect yourself from the threat of a cyber-attack here:

www.ecclesiastical.com/risk-management/cyber-security/



Protect yourself with Cyber Insurance cover

Ecclesiastical's Cyber Insurance cover is comprehensive and flexible and will dovetail with your existing insurance policy. You can choose a cover limit appropriate to your level of risk, which can include equipment replacement costs, investigation costs, legal advice, liability and data breach costs, and data restoration.

Call us on 0345 777 3322 to speak about your level of risk and whether Cyber insurance cover is right for you.



Our Church Insurance Consultants are right behind you

Meet Ecclesiastical's Church Insurance Consultants – a friendly and approachable team of highly knowledgeable insurance experts who are right on your doorstep and ready to offer guidance and help with any insurance or risk-related issues you might have.



From a simple explanation of the basics of your policy, to guidance on how to combat thieves and vandals, guard against fire, and improve general health and safety, they are there for you, free of charge.

The team – (from top left) Chris, Rebecca, Heather, Lynne, Peter, Nicky, Kay and Derek – are all deeply passionate about customer service, and our country's amazing churches.

Amongst them are theologians, choristers, regular churchgoers, and people who have worked with Christian charities here and abroad, so they really understand your specific needs. And because they're based at regional locations all over the UK, they're also able to tailor their advice to your local requirements.

They have decades of combined industry experience – and standing behind them is Ecclesiastical's 134 years of unrivalled expertise and insight in dealing with everything life might throw at you.

Where possible, the Church Insurance Consultants love to meet customers and talk face-to-face, and are happy to host networking events where you can get to know people from other parishes and share experience, ideas – and smiles.

But if we find ourselves in a COVID-19 lockdown or you're simply unable to meet them in person, they're still there, offering exactly the same services online or over the telephone.

To find out more about the team, and how they could help you and your church, please visit: www.ecclesiastical.com/church/cic or email meetus@ecclesiastical.com (please include your contact details, the name of your church and parish, and policy number if possible), or call them on **0345 777 3322**.



Make your good news a headline story!

This year, Ecclesiastical's church competition shines a light on churches across the UK – their bright ideas and success stories, community heroes and ingenuity in the face of adversity.

It's easy to overlook the important things that keep church communities strong, especially at difficult times, which is why we're looking for your uplifting stories that support church activities and bring the community together.

Tell us about your moments of inspiration, your clever solutions to problems old and new, and the people who've solved them – we want to hear your good news stories that can make front page headlines.

Find out more about the competition and how your church can enter at www.ecclesiastical.com/churchcomp [#churchgoodnews](https://twitter.com/churchgoodnews)

Information at your fingertips

Have you visited the Ecclesiastical website recently? It's had a bit of a facelift and looks really good. It is also full of advice and information about a wide range of risk management topics and includes Made Simple Guides about building works, people on premises and property. You will also find information about church, home, commercial and legal insurance and how to make a claim. You can also read an online copy of Ecclesiastical's bi-annual newsletter, Church Matters!

Explore the website at www.ecclesiastical.com/church



Contains promotional material

How online fundraising can boost your church

With summer around the corner, you may be starting to think about future events and how to raise those ever-important funds. Many churches have been looking at running events online, and it might be the best way forward at the moment. Ecclesiastical has put together some great ideas and top tips to get you started or increase your online success.

To get started, have fun and think creatively. What do you do face-to-face and how could that translate to online? Quizzes are great fun and easy to put together. You could have a quiz master read out the questions over a Zoom call, share your screen to display visual questions, or circulate quiz sheets via email and social media. How about streaming an online choir concert, or run craft or baking classes via Teams and sell virtual tickets to your Internet audience? Another idea is to offer the opportunity to request a favourite hymn in return for a donation.

More and more churches are using the Internet to reach not just their congregation and the wider community, but potential supporters literally everywhere. Online community groups and social media outlets like Twitter, Instagram and Facebook are a great way to publicise your activity to a new, wider audience – and particularly younger people who are otherwise hard to reach.

Ask them to sponsor a personal challenge and invite them to come up with their own challenges to benefit your church. Fundraising sites like **JustGiving.com** are quick to set up and can easily be widely promoted online. The Internet is also ideal for keeping everyone up to date, which is essential to keep those donations coming in. If you haven't dabbled yet, maybe have a look at what another church or community organisation has done.

If you find the Internet a bit daunting, once you strip away the jargon it's often much simpler than it appears. For instance, 'streaming' might sound difficult and mysterious, but user-friendly services such as Microsoft Teams are easy to download and can be used by lots of people joining in on their PCs, smartphones, or tablets.

Supporters can buy virtual 'tickets' – or make donations – via dedicated online fundraising platforms like **TapSimple.org** or **Eventbrite.co.uk**, which offer a one-stop process from hosting your event to processing payments and contributions. Many of them will handle Gift Aid for you too.

If your church has a specific project to pay for – a new sound system, why not try to 'crowdfund' via a website? These harness the power of a crowd of funders rather than individual donors. They take a matter of minutes to set up, using sites like **Crowdfunder.co.uk**, and provide a permanent home for your story, where you can post updates and images of your project for your supporters.

If this still feels too technical, ask around – someone in your congregation or local area who regularly uses a computer or a smartphone for work or leisure may already use these tools and can help you get started. Youngsters might jump at the chance to get involved, if only to show their parents and grandparents how it's done!



Fundraising in a Box

Earlier this year, Ecclesiastical sent out a 'Fundraising in a Box' kit to its church customers containing four booklets giving guidance and support to make the fundraising journey easier. For more information and guidance, including some really helpful webinars, please visit the Ecclesiastical fundraising hub at **www.ecclesiastical.com/church/fundraising** (if you are an Ecclesiastical customer and require further copies of the box, please contact us via the website).

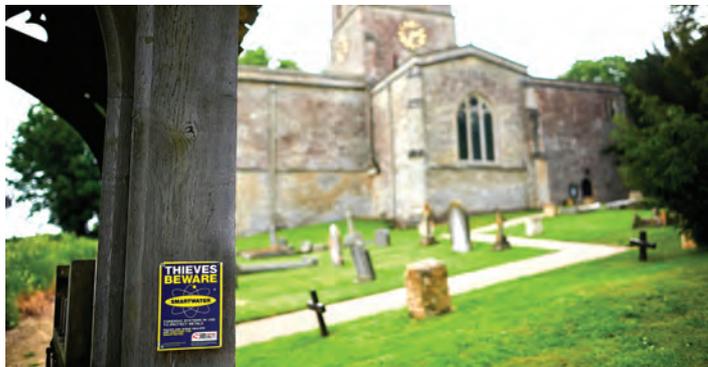
Have you heard the e-news?

E-news is a monthly email full of tips and information for all Ecclesiastical church customers and anyone in your church community. To receive it is easy – all you need to do is register on their website at **www.ecclesiastical.com/signup** and if at any time you decide you no longer want to receive it, you can click the 'unsubscribe' button at the bottom of the email. Feel free to pass on the sign-up website to anyone you think might like it.



Three cheers for roof alarms and SmartWater®!

Churches with these systems have found it's had a positive impact on reducing the risk of metal theft.



SmartWater® recently helped Police convict four criminals responsible for stealing metal from 35 churches located in Midlands, East Anglia and the South-West¹. And a roof alarm helped St Bartholomew's in Lancashire to scare off attackers not once, but three times in the same month.

St Bartholomew's has a 'monitored roof alarm' which sends out an audible warning on site, and alerts the alarm-receiving centre of movement on the church roof. The centre contacted the church's key-holder, and neighbours called the Police. As a result, offenders were arrested on site with tools in hand.

Lead and copper roofing are materials that characterise our beautiful churches – but thieves love it too, and churches are often a target. As COVID-19 restrictions ease, Ecclesiastical anticipate organised crime will return to target less well-protected areas of lead. The good news is there's positive actions you can take to protect your church.

A roof alarm is one, particularly if your church has significant amounts of metal. Ask Ecclesiastical for a list of approved installers. An approved forensic security marking solution such as SmartWater® is another. This is a clever liquid like DNA that you apply to external metal. It's unique to your church so items can be traced back to you. You must register it with the supplier and display signage, which acts as a deterrent. Using a forensic solution is a condition of your theft of metal cover. If you choose SmartWater®, Ecclesiastical will register it for you, saving you £120.

Thieves are likely to use a vehicle to carry their heavy stolen metal away. Restrict vehicle access with locked gates, fences and bollards.

Consider installing security lighting and cut back trees that might conceal criminals as they work.

There is more advice on the website: www.ecclesiastical.com/churchmetaltheft and also St Bartholomew's full story: www.ecclesiastical.com/documents/metal.pdf

¹ BBC News, 6 January 2021.

Risk helpline

The Ecclesiastical Risk Advice Line is available 9am-5pm Monday to Friday (except bank holidays).

Call: 0345 600 7531

Email: risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com

Taking a sabbatical in 2022

Ecclesiastical's Ministry Bursary Awards provide financial support for members of the clergy taking extended study leave, and they are now accepting applications for sabbaticals taking place in 2022. You can find out more about the awards, check the eligibility criteria and apply on the website.

Find out more: www.ecclesiastical.com/mba



Rebuilding stronger from COVID-19

Churches and Christian charities throughout the UK and Ireland have received more than £3.8 million in funding to support their communities to rebuild stronger in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Allchurches Trust's Hope Beyond programme has supported more than 500 projects aimed at tackling loneliness, boosting mental health and building digital resilience. While the programme has now closed, Allchurches – the charitable owner of Ecclesiastical Insurance Group – is currently considering the next phase of its COVID-19 response.

St Luke's Healthcare for the clergy has received £20,000 Hope Beyond funding to offer counselling and therapy to support clergy and their families suffering as a result of COVID-19, giving them increased resilience and skills as they help the most vulnerable.



Shine – the community organisation working with St Stephen's Church in West Bowling, Bradford – will use its £5,500 Hope Beyond grant to transform a basement room into a counselling space, which leads onto a tranquil garden ideal for wellbeing groups.

To find out more about funding, and advice and resources for churches, head to www.allchurches.co.uk

Financial services

Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services (EFAS) provides expert, independent financial advice including for pension, investments, life assurance and mortgages to the clergy, church people and PCCs.

Call: 0800 107 0190

Email: getadvice@ecclesiastical.com

www.ecclesiastical.com/financial-advice



Funeral planning

Ecclesiastical can help you make financial provision for your funeral, reducing the worry for your family and ensuring your wishes are provided for.

Call: 0800 055 6503

Email: info@epsfunerals.com

www.funeralplans.co.uk



Car insurance

The Clergy Motor Insurance provided by Ecclesiastical is tailored specifically for the clergy and includes benefits such as business use, no admin charges and up to £500 cover for church goods in the car.¹

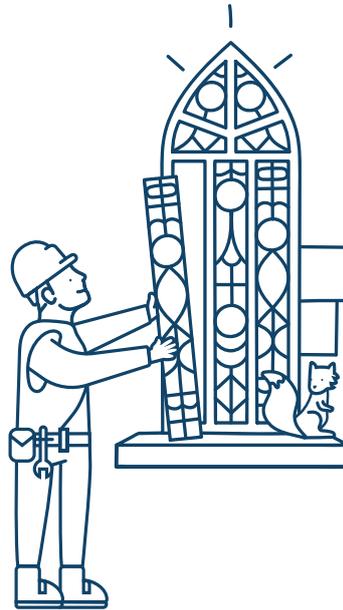
Call: 0345 450 9396

www.ecclesiastical.com/church/car-insurance

¹Subject to terms and conditions.



Protect your home and support your church with Trust130



Ecclesiastical has donated more than £430,000 to churches around the UK as part of their Trust130 campaign and it's been particularly helpful during the pandemic. Even the smallest amounts can make a big difference.

St Mark's and All Saints churches in West Parley, in the Diocese of Salisbury, are like many other churches – Treasurer Derek Warner is looking at a shortfall of between £15,000 and £18,000 for the year. Ecclesiastical's recent Trust130 donation of £650 went into general funds, and was a welcome addition.

'It's been extremely tough,' said Mr Warner. 'We have had no congregations, so obviously that means no collections. But even more importantly, we have lost all of our income from church hall lettings. We have survived by eating into our capital, and I'm looking at ways of cutting our budgets for 2021.'

'Donations such as the Trust130 money from Ecclesiastical Insurance are absolutely vital – they are really interested in helping churches and their communities and we're very grateful to them.'

Trust130 continues into 2021 to help and support churches

Ecclesiastical is really pleased to be extending the offer to run throughout 2021. Supporting your church is easy. Simply take out a home insurance policy¹ with Ecclesiastical and they will donate £130 to the church of your choice. And, of course, the more people who take out home insurance policies, the more funds that are raised. So even if you've got a really ambitious goal – like raising funds for a new church roof – there's nothing to stop you.

Want to know more?

It really is wonderful to hear how this programme is helping customers and the things that matter to them. You can hear more about what some customers are saying in a brand-new film clip on Ecclesiastical's website – simply go to the website to watch:

www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130

If you would like a home insurance quote or more information, simply call 0800 7830 130 and quote AVNEWS21.

¹Subject to terms and conditions – please visit www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130

Trust130.
Limitless donations.
Endless possibilities.



The Department for Outreach

The Department for Outreach is the newest department in Church House. It brings together the Departments of Social Responsibility and Mission and its aim is to encourage and support mission and evangelism across the diocese, in parishes and elsewhere, that we might enable people to grow as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

What do we mean by mission?

Our understanding is based on the Anglican Communion's Five Marks:

'The mission of the Church is the mission of Christ

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.'

www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx

These are sometimes summarised as: Tell, Teach, Tend, Transform and Treasure. It is humbling and encouraging to know that the mission of every local church, indeed of every Christian, is the same as the mission of Jesus Christ, and of God's worldwide church.

But we also know that committing ourselves to this mission is demanding. There are times we might find ourselves hindered or discouraged. That's why God calls people into the church as he calls them to himself. Belonging to the church we combine our talents and passions and make ourselves, together, more than the sum of our parts. And help in this mission can come from outside the local congregation as well, from the wider church. The Department for Outreach is part of that help. Members of the department have particular skills in significant areas of church life, as well as a commitment to helping churches as they make Jesus known and mirror his love in their communities.

What kind of help can the Department of Outreach bring?



The youth, children and families' missionary, **Jonny Masters**, focuses on supporting parishes to minister alongside young generations. Jonny has developed a strong network of Leaders of Young Generations across the Diocese. The LOYG network welcomes all who minister with children, young people and families – whether paid or unpaid.

The network receives regular information about upcoming events and training as well as resources. If you'd like to join, do get in touch with him. Alongside this, Jonny supports workers on a one-to-one basis as requested, assists parishes with vision setting and works

with other Diocesan Advisers to provide high-quality support and training that is accessible to parishes in the Diocese of Chester.

Martin Smith is the Diocesan Christian Giving and Pastoral Reorganisation Missioner. As the Christian Giving Missioner, Martin provides advice and assistance to parishes on all matters relating to giving. His role includes helping parishes to undertake Giving Initiatives. As Pastoral Reorganisation Missioner, Martin advises on pastoral reorganisation matters. His responsibilities include the preparation of proposals for Pastoral Schemes and Orders and the administration of the associated statutory consultations. Martin is also the Assistant Secretary to the Chester and Macclesfield Archidiaconal Mission and Pastoral Committees.



As the fourth of the Five Marks highlights, a concern for marginalised and vulnerable people is part of a Christian's identity. **Vanessa Layfield** is the Engagement and Inclusion Officer for the Diocese. She is passionate about inclusion and working with those on the margins. She works towards making our

church communities as accessible as possible in all ways for all people. This includes helping with accessibility audits of parish churches, advising on adaptations to buildings, worship resources and encouraging PCCs to include disabled people in leadership positions. She also offers training events for parishes on accessibility. In the wider diocese, she is putting together an online celebration of different abilities service and three sessions of training for youth and children's workers on the subject of children with additional needs are planned. Additionally, Vanessa has been instrumental in launching and developing the newly formed Diocesan Race and Ethnicity Forum. Forum members are currently working with Cathedral staff to plan an art exhibition entitled 'Global Images of Christ'. Furthermore, with the support of Archdeacon Ian, they are planning the delivery of unconscious bias training throughout the Diocese during 2021/2.

Continued on page 8...





A church's buildings can be both a blessing and a burden and our Buildings Missioner, **Emily Allen**, has been a huge help to many as they think about them. She says: "I work with parishes in considering the dynamic of places and spaces, (church buildings and church halls), in ministry and mission, and contribute to related Diocesan

thinking. Support includes helping parishes overcome hurdles with capital fundraising for repairs and improvements, project management to think afresh about spaces, heritage interpretation and missional projects. Recent projects are 1). 'Houses of Prayer': parishes appreciatively enquiring of buildings as places of divine encounter. 2). Establishing a Church Café group. 3). Building God's Kingdom: a research and development paper mapping the landscape of Diocesan church buildings. 4). COVID-19 response funding guidance."

They also support the work of a number of other forums, which aim to highlight areas of particular need and concern. These are: the Environment Forum; the Mental Health Forum; the Criminal Justice Group: the Rural Committee and the Urban Committee. Hannah and Rebecca may well be your first point of contact if you want to get in touch.



More generally, along with others in the team, and the coming Mission Adviser, my role as Director is to help churches move onwards in mission and evangelism. We are living through a great and pain-filled disruption; but God has not changed and the need for the Good News of the Kingdom of God is perhaps more obvious than

ever. My prayer is that, through the Department of Outreach, the churches of the diocese, and people in other ministries, would be enabled to serve Christ and their communities with ever-increasing insight, confidence and joy.

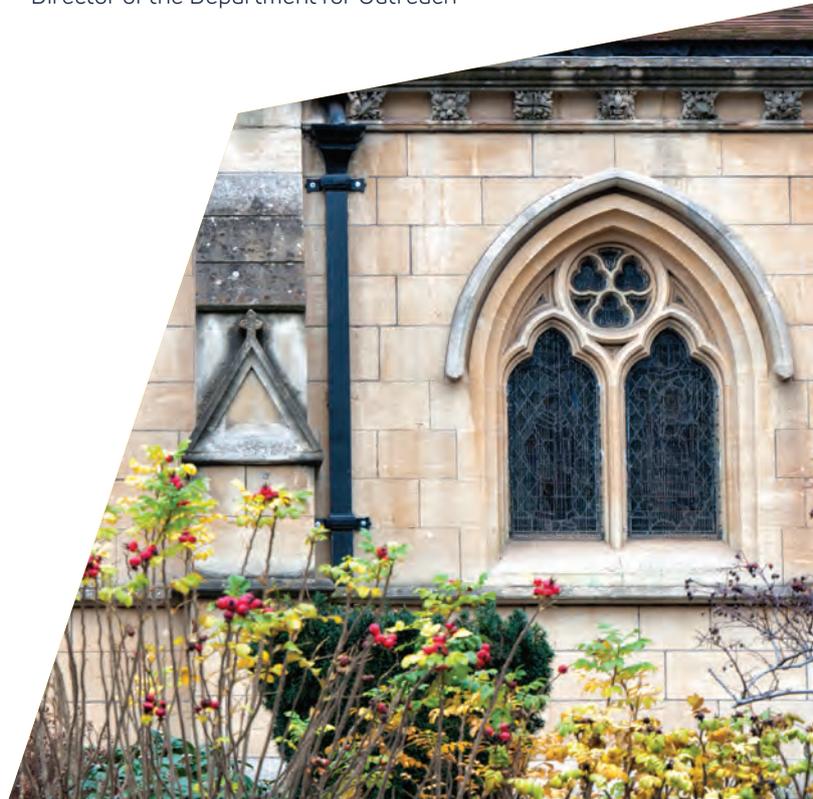
Peter Froggatt
Director of the Department for Outreach



The Director of the Diocesan Counselling team, **Peter Mackriell**, is part of the Department for Outreach. He says: "Sometimes we need a good listening to! Members of the Diocesan Counselling Team create safe, confidential spaces where both lay and ordained people can explore challenges and opportunities as they arise. Life

can feel out of control or rather flat; bereavement or redundancy, a house move or a breakdown in relationship can leave us angry or sad; the future can feel scary, the present overwhelming or the past throws a long shadow. Counselling can help to address such challenges to our mental health and wellbeing, and opens up opportunities for growth and development."

There is support and advice on the workings of the team from our Administrative Assistants, **Hannah Jones** and **Rebecca Hathaway**.



For more information

Call: 0345 777 3322 **Email:** churches@ecclesiastical.com
Facebook: Ecclesiastical **Twitter:** @churchmatters



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