



Cutting Edge

*The Newsletter of the Anglican Chaplaincy and friends at
The University of Sheffield*





Contact details

We have moved to 205 Brook Hill—the new home for the Belief, No Belief and Religious (BNBR) Life Centre, of which we are part. Close to the Brook Hill roundabout, the building is located between the University Arms pub and the Hicks Building. The BNBR Life Centre occupies the ground and first floors, with the Campus Trade Unions on the second floor. You are welcome to visit! The building has step-free access.

Our hours during university teaching periods are:
9.00am – 5.00pm, Monday – Thursday; 9.00am – 3.00pm, Friday

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Welcome

A warm welcome to our latest edition of Cutting Edge, which brings news of Anglican chaplaincy ministry at the University of Sheffield. The biggest news to share is of the appointment of a new Anglican Chaplain, the Reverend Sue Leather who began serving with us in September 2025 and was licensed by the Right Reverend Leah Vasey-Saunders in early November on the day the new physical home for the Belief, No Belief and Religious (BNBR) Life Centre was opened.

Jeremy Clines, University Co-ordinating Chaplain

Front cover image (and below)

Members of the Christian Chaplaincy team outside the Belief, No Belief and Religious (BNBR) Life Centre at 205 Brook Hill. From left to right: Jeremy Clines, Co-ordinating Chaplain; Carol Forbes, International Chaplain; Sue Leather, Anglican Chaplain; and Rob Barnett, Assistant to the Chaplains. Jeremy, Carol, Sue and Rob are the four Christian members of the BNBR Life Centre's core team. One of 10 chaplaincies at the Centre, the Christian Chaplaincy has a dozen other team members representing different denominations. The chalkboard, pictured, attracts many students into the building, which is at the heart of campus. on Western Bank.



Our new home at 205 Brook Hill

We are delighted with our new home at 205 Brook Hill! Located at the heart of campus, the building has various-sized rooms which can be used for myriad purposes. The Belief, No Belief and Religious (BNBR) Life Centre - of which we are part - occupies the ground and first floors while the Campus Trade Unions are on the second floor.

The BNBR Life Centre moved out of the Octagon Centre in summer 2024. This was initially on a temporary basis due to university security's concerns, particularly for graduation ceremonies in the Octagon, about the proximity of a pro-Gaza protest camp outside the Students' Union, a short distance away.

Our temporary home was at 9 Mappin Street, a university building off bustling West Street and much closer to Sheffield city centre than the Octagon. Due to changes in the way the Octagon was being used - more so than before for commercial events like concerts - we had an inkling that we wouldn't be returning. So it proved as our stay at 9 Mappin Street - on the second floor of an office-style building - was extended from a few weeks to a few months and into early 2025.



Eventually we learned that our new permanent home would be 205 Brook Hill, a building soon to be vacated by the university's Estates and Facilities Management (EFM) team. We moved in during March, knowing there would be several months of internal and external work by EFM staff and external contractors to tailor the building to our needs. This included step-free access and the demolition of nearby Brook Hill Hall.

Most of the work was completed by September 2025 in time for the start of the new university year. Some finishing touches were put in place ahead of an official opening day in early November.

A brief history of 205 Brook Hill

Our move into 205 Brook Hill continues an historic use for Christian purposes, as Jeremy Clines explores.

The land for this building was purchased by a Sheffield Silver Plater, Samuel Ellis, in 1797. Records show he and his family were living in the place by 1810. The main entrance was at the east of the property. The large south facing bay windows were added sometime in the mid-19th century.

By 1905 we know it was occupied by the Vicar of St Anne's CofE church Netherthorpe (the church was opened in 1883 and demolished in 1951 as part of the works for the tower blocks in Netherthorpe in the Ponderosa area).

Unusually there were a cluster of four adjacent vicarages at the turn of the 20th century,

- 205 Brook Hill was St Anne's vicarage;
- 197 Brook Hill, next door, now the University Arms, was the vicarage for St Paul's (an 18th church on Pinstone St where the Peace Gardens now are);
- 5 Favell Rd (recently demolished) the vicarage for St Jude's (on Eldon St / Milton St);
- 6 Favell Rd (previously demolished), for St George's, Portobello (now St George's lecture theatre).

By 1922 205 Brook Hill had been sold to St George's Church, Portobello, and it served as their Church House and Young Men's Society. The Memorial Hall was built to the rear of 205 in c. 1924/25. The linking corridor between Brook Hill Hall and 205 dates from the period between 1930 and 1950 during St George's use of 205, it was also during this time that the top floor was added, so it wasn't servant's quarters after all!

- Residential buildings of the late 18th or early 19th century are rare survivals in Sheffield. Those that exist are mostly to be found in the modern city centre. Beyond the city centre most buildings of this age are farms or cottages.
- Suburban villas predating the expansion of the town during the second quarter of the 19th century, which resulted in the creation of significant numbers of villas such as those on Glossop Road, are especially rare.
- Along with its immediate neighbour 197 Brook Hill it is a prominent reminder of the last fragments of 19th century Sheffield which have been largely overwhelmed by 20th and 21st century development, mainly the creation and expansion of the University of Sheffield.

(Information gathered from various sources including the Local Heritage List.)

Notes from Co-ordinating Chaplain Jeremy Clines

Anglican Chaplain appointment

Following the departure of our first self-supporting ordained Anglican Chaplain Sabine Tenge-Heslop who contributed from 2021 to 2024, we began a process to discern if there was someone who would like to take up the position.

This was done with the support of the Diocese of Sheffield, and the senior staff member responsible for chaplaincy, The Venerable Javaid Iqbal, the Archdeacon of Doncaster, and the Diocesan Board of Finance who funded the advertisement and have provided expenses of office for the first three years of the appointment.

We were thrilled that Revd Dr Sue Leather applied, and via that discernment process of reflection and interview chose to begin serving with us. The funds held by the ACT allow Sue (pictured below, third from left, with students on a walk at Forge Dam) to develop new initiatives, but our budget will not remain in surplus for much longer. The grant from the Diocese has been a huge help, we do however need to secure new funds, and Trustees are discussing this and also we make use of this newsletter to flag the need that is present, for any



Notes from Co-ordinating Chaplain continued...

and Trustees are discussing this and also we make use of this newsletter to flag the need that is present, for any who can begin giving or increase their giving. Please see page 18 for more information.

Updates on BNBR Life Centre structure / 10 chaplaincies

As the BNBR Life Centre has developed Jeremy has helped restructure its identity so we now have 10 chaplaincies, that all sit under the umbrella of the Centre, but have the autonomy to develop in different ways that are distinctive and varied.

It is intended that all chaplaincies have a minimum of two members to assist with planning, development and absence.

The Christian chaplaincy has three sections, Christian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and the third section is Free Church and Anglican.



All the 10 chaplaincies meet together five times a year to learn from each other, and share notes. This has created a more inclusive and equal environment, and at the same time allows each chaplaincy and its smaller sections to work on their own priorities, allowing the Anglican Chaplaincy Trust to focus even more specifically on an Anglican contribution to campus life.

Anglican Chaplaincy Trust and Trustees

The outgoing acting chair of the Trust Sue Grocutt stepped down at the start of 2025 and it was agreed that Jeremy would become a trustee and chair, and that the president of the Anglican Society (a student society here at the university) would hold an ex officio role on the trust. This helps with ongoing decisions about the use of finances, and supporting the Anglican Chaplain, Sue Leather, in her ministry.

Notes from our new Anglican Chaplain Sue Leather

New beginnings!

What a joy to have recently been appointed as Anglican Chaplain to the University of Sheffield from September 2025 and licensed by Bishop Leah (pictured opposite) on November 5th 2025 on the day of the official opening of the relocated Belief, No Belief and Religious (BNBR) Life Centre on Brook Hill. Ordained priest in June 2025, I continue to serve as Assistant Curate in Derby City Centre alongside this new role.

I trained from 2022 – 2024 for ordained ministry through the dispersed learning route at Trinity College, Bristol, so have recent experience of student life and writing assignments! Be-

longing amid transience are particular interests, given the links between belonging, healing and flourishing. How can we belong when we are only going to be present somewhere (like Uni) for a short time? I am informed and influenced by frequent moves during childhood, by a career focused on the health of neurodiverse, care experienced, unaccompanied and separated young people, and by voluntary work with and alongside forced migrants. Recently I undertook



primary research related to belonging, for an MA TMM dissertation, titled “Towards an understanding of Koinnia in the context of welcoming refugees into the Church of England.” It is encouraging how these interests relate to the University context and the focus on belonging within the wider Student Equality Diversity and Inclusion team (known as the Belonging Team!) that the BNBR Life Centre sits within.

Here I am enjoying the many different aspects of the chaplaincy role. It is a great privilege to sit with people, holding space and being with them for example as they face the struggles of university life or in their grief. It has been lovely welcoming folk to the Centre, enabling them to enjoy this hospitable welcoming place complete with piano and working spaces! It has been really encouraging to pray daily together as the Christian chaplaincy team, to start to

Notes from our new Anglican Chaplain Sue Leather

hospitable welcoming place complete with piano and working spaces! It has been really encouraging to pray daily together as the Christian chaplaincy team, to start to network, get to know student societies, local churches, staff in various departments and individual students, the latter particularly facilitated through having a regular fortnightly stall over extended lunch breaks in the Students' Union Foyer. It has been wonderful to work collaboratively with other chaplains; we held well attended events such as the Faith Food Fayre during Inter Faith Week and the Ecumenical Christmas Carol Service.

I was raised in East Africa, studied at medical college in London and then worked for many years as an NHS doctor, mainly in Southeast London, only recently moving to Derby. It is a steep learning curve experiencing all things East Midlands and I am just about finding my way around Sheffield! A highlight of the move 'up north' has been the proximity of the Peak District. How cool to have had a first Staff Awayday in beautiful Edale and then opportunity to join in longer walks with students during the spring and summer semesters. I relish time outdoors, walking and exploring with friends and family including grandchildren. Favourite walks include Curbar Edge circuit and Lathkill Dale. Note to self: always take a waterproof!

Please keep praying for the Christian Chaplaincy for wisdom and for courage as we share the love, reconciliation and hope found in Jesus, through our actions and words. Please hold in your prayers every staff member and student here at the University of Sheffield. Thank you.



University Carol Service, by Rob Barnett

The annual University Carol Service is proving ever-popular, perhaps increasingly so, among staff and students.

Firth Hall has been packed for the lunchtime event for the last few years, with more students than before joining staff and visitors.

It is interesting to wonder what is behind this trend, besides the wonderful singing of the students who make up the University Chamber Choir.

At the most recent service, in 2025, Anglican Chaplain Sue Leather gave the address; speaking about how the changing seasons bring hope, just like Jesus' birth does.

In 2024 Father Lee Marshall, the Roman Catholic Associate Chaplain, reflected on C.S. Lewis' novel *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*; specifically how it mirrors the Christian story, giving the choice of whether Jesus is 'mad, bad or God'.

With the 2023 service being fairly soon after the outbreak of conflict in the Middle East, it drew on the theme of Jesus, Mary and Joseph being refugees in the years after Jesus' birth. Jeremy Clines, in his address, spoke of how we can find hope in the Christmas story.

Alongside each service there has been an online collection, raising over £250 each year for a nominated local charity: ASSIST Sheffield in 2023; Roundabout in 2024; and Sheffield Young Carers in 2025.

All the above continue to make the service a highlight of the Anglican Chaplaincy's work, alongside our other Christian colleagues at the BNBR Life Centre.



Meet International Chaplain Carol Forbes

Carol Forbes is International Chaplain at the BNR Life Centre, having joined the team in Spring 2025. She is employed in this role by a Christian charity called Friends International.

Hello! My name is Carol. I was born and grew up in the desert region of northern China. I came to the UK in 2014 as an international student, so I am familiar with the joys & challenges of being an international student!

My husband and I moved to Sheffield and have been here since 2019 and we have two young boys. I love to eat delicious spicy food, watching Korean dramas and enjoying the very limited sun that Sheffield provides!

Reaching out to international students has always played an important part in my heart. When I was an international student, I was deeply touched by those who helped me, listened to me and cared for me when I needed it.

Since then I have longed to give the same help, listening support and care to other international students that I once received.



It was because of this I joined Friends International, which is an interdenominational Christian charity that seeks to share God's love with international students by welcoming and befriending students from all around the world.

I love my role in Friends International as I have the privilege to meet students from different cultures and backgrounds and can learn so much from them.

If you are an international student and need a listening ear, please don't hesitate to contact me on c.forbes@sheffield.ac.uk.

Carol, pictured above, on the left of the photo, with Sue Leather, is fundraising to support her own role. Feel free to contact Carol about this.

Notes by our Anglican Lay Minister Shelley Johnston

An unexpected evening session in the kitchen of (at the time) a friend of a friend, involving an awful lot of chocolate mini rolls and putting the world to rights led to both an unexpected friendship and an unexpected text message.

It's funny how God works, because I had seen the advert for a self-supporting minister to work in the University chaplaincy and decided not to apply because I was not at all sure of either my abilities or calling at that point.

The text message could be summarized as follows: "We are a man down. You are Anglican and interested in chaplaincy, aren't you? Get in here."

Next thing I know, I am talking to the chief cat-herder (operations manager) who makes everything work, and there are notes and prompts for bereavement support groups, one-to-one listening ear appointments, and of course the delights of fire safety training.

Formal duties aside, my first student encounter was with a student taking refuge from the busyness of campus in the tea and coffee area. We chatted as I found my way around the tea and coffee making facilities and I suddenly realised I had been chatting for 20 minutes when I was supposed to be doing fire safety training. I scooted back to the office apologising for getting distracted. Oh no, I was merrily told; that's no problem at all, that's exactly what we want you here for.

And the penny suddenly dropped: The ministry I had always had to carve space out for around my "real work", the stolen moments comforting relatives at bed-sides, the midnights quietly singing hymns on wards when I was ostensibly there to take blood or prescribe medicine, the late nights with crying friends... always in corners, always over-and-above, often not really approved of.... Here that ministry was front and centre. A whole space dedicated to holding space,



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nights with crying friends...always in corners, always over-and-above, often not really approved of.... Here that ministry was front and centre. A whole space dedicated to holding space, caring and nurturing people until they can find a way to face their lives again.

Here there is an absolute presumption that talking and listening to people is an essential and important activity.

Here the ministry of presence is not dismissed as “doing nothing”, but known as a real and dynamic process to be learned and practiced because it can be transformative in people’s lives.

The first grief group was such a joy. Clutching notes reminding me to trust my instincts and hold still and allow people to process, I watched as two people made huge leaps in processing their losses. It was such an honour to be allowed in that vulnerable space with them. They have no idea of course how grateful I am to them for trusting me with their pain. I certainly did not admit that I was on new territory as much as they were!

But grateful I remain, and equally grateful to all the others who have come and talked and shared with me. If there is one way to find out what it means that every human is made in the image of God, then surely this is it. Chaplaincy may sound very altruistic, but I am not sure it is. I think I have been paid back for every moment of my time here with the rewards of being able to walk alongside people-sometimes briefly, sometimes for longer, but always, always with a little bit more of a revelation of how wondrous is God's creation in Human beings.

Shelley, below third from left on front row, at the team licensing service.



Anglican Society by president Brett Marsden

In October of 2024, the Anglican Society was founded – or by some accounts refounded – to serve students at the universities of Sheffield.

It was our goal and still is to bring together Anglicans from all traditions and walks of life to focus on what brings us together: a common Anglican heritage in a world that seems to be moving away from organised religion.

We have organised hikes, Society dinners, been a part of the Students' Union's Refreshers' Fair, and started regular Book of Common Prayer Evening Prayer in collaboration with help from the Prayer Book Society and the Belief, No Belief and Religious Life Centre.

As President of the Anglican Society and as a student at the University of Sheffield, the BNBR Life Centre has been a great help during my time here. It has been a welcoming – and somewhat eclectic – home away from home which provides an invaluable service to the students here.

When I arrived it was in its temporary home at 9 Mappin Street, fitting around the economics department, now finding itself at a far more appropriate and convenient location; next to the University Arms pub!

It is this new location where we hope to use to the fullest possible to fulfil the missions of the Anglican Society and Anglican Chaplaincy Trust – namely to create a home for Anglican students and continue to spread the good news on campus.

Brett Marsden is pictured on the left of these Anglican Society members.



Tammy Hervey explains the University Listening Project

Religion, Belief and Universities: The Listening Project at Sheffield University's Belief, No Belief and Religious Life Centre

Universities are complex—formally speaking mainly secular—organisations. They have multiple and sometimes overlapping relationships with the people within them: their students and their staff. Religion and belief is an important aspect of the identities of the people who go to make up a university. The Listening Project – led by Rev Dr Jeremy Clines – is a response to that aspect of people's identities.

The Listening Project is multi-layered.

It is a research project, investigating the formal legal obligations to respect and protect religion and belief identities (within which are 'no-belief' identities); the moral or social aspects of that respect; and the interests universities have in understanding and protecting religion and belief identities.

It is a learning space, through which we learn from stories of exclusion (and inclusion) within universities, on the basis of religion and belief; and help others to learn about how to make universities a place where religion and belief identities are not only accommodated, but also celebrated.

It is a consultancy, helping university leadership to develop policies, practices and procedures which are respectful of religion and belief identities; to work with staff and students to embed greater understanding of religion and belief across a wide range of university activities from admissions and assessment of students, to staff terms and conditions of employment; and to seek to share examples of good practice.

The Listening Project's methodology draws strongly on the narrative form. We use an iterative practice of listening to, reflecting on, and retelling stories concerning religion and belief identities on campus from anyone who wishes to tell them or hear them.

So far, we've presented the Listening Project to the International Association of Chaplains in Higher Education conference in Sheffield June 2022, and we will be presenting in conferences in the summer of 2026.

Chaplaincy Assistant Rob Barnett shares his reflections

The Anglican Chaplaincy, as part of the BNBR Life Centre, could barely have hoped for a better home than it has at 205 Brook Hill. And that's not just because it's next to the University Arms pub!

205 has an interesting history - certainly from a Christian viewpoint (see page five) - at the heart of campus, with lots of natural light and a variety of rooms.

The Gathering space, with large bay windows, is ideal for our weekly semester-time services; the Lounge, with three sofas, is perfect for a cuppa; and the Activities space can host meetings of 20 people or accommodate crafts and games.

So it's an extra pleasure to welcome students, staff and visitors while being mindful that it's also vital to use other spaces around campus and beyond to engage the university community.



Sue Leather, our Anglican Chaplain, hosts stalls in the Students' Union which get lots of interaction; and I continue to be part of activities like Peak District walks.

These walks build on the legacy of the previous Anglican Chaplain Sabine Tenge-Heslop, who instigated and led many walks during a vibrant three years in post.

I co-lead three or four walks, like the one pictured above, a year with Jazz Shoker from the wider Student Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team (of which the BNBR Life Centre is part).

Going by bus or train into the Peak District, Jazz and I typically take six to 12 students at a time to picturesque locations. It gives students a relaxed space to chat, a change of scenery, and maybe the impetus to go to the Peaks on other occasions.

Other personal highlights have been organising and leading student retreats

Chaplaincy Assistant Rob Barnett shares his reflections

Other personal highlights have been organising and leading student retreats (some for undergraduates, some for postgraduates) to the Community of the Resurrection monastery at Mirfield in West Yorkshire (photo below). Just 24 hours there gives me and the students a refreshing experience, for many like nothing before.

Perhaps a similar new experience for students came by taking a group to Liverpool for a repeat of the 24-hour trip in 2023. The dozen this time enjoyed the sights and history, including the city's Christian heritage, with an expert guide in Jeremy Clines.

Back on campus Jeremy has re-vamped the regular Christian worship.

Gritstone and God is the name of our new inclusive and affirming gatherings (referencing the gritstone millstones that shaped Sheffield): a short Service of the Word on Wednesday lunchtime; brief daily prayer on Mondays and Thursdays; and once a month a 45-minute informal service on a Wednesday afternoon, with time afterwards for socialising.



The latter, sometimes involving communion, is a continuation of a Wednesday early evening service that Jeremy and Sabine led during 2022-23.

Each element of Gritstone and God has proved valuable: the shorter sessions being a chance for staff and occasionally one or more students to pray and reflect on Scripture together; the longer Wednesday afternoon services drawing a small but faithful following of students and some of our Christian volunteers who are typically with us on Wednesdays.

On the subject of Wednesdays, on Ash Wednesdays we have offered ashing outside the Students' Union. Call me pessimistic, but I'm pleasantly surprised by the number of students and staff who stop to be ashed. And a few curious passers-by generally ask what's going on too.

How to support the Anglican Chaplaincy



Members of the BNBR Life Centre's Christian Chaplaincy team alongside the Right Reverend Leah Vasey-Saunders, the Bishop of Doncaster, left.

Please pray for our work, both regular events and seasonal/occasional events and groups.

Donations

Our thanks are due to all those who have made donations to the Anglican Chaplaincy Trust in recent years. Your donations are a great help in resourcing our mission and ministry.

The University of Sheffield is a secular institution—and consequently, the Anglican Chaplaincy Trust, as part of the Belief, No Belief and Religious (BNBR) Life Centre, depends on the support, primarily of individual donors, to resource its activities. You might like to make a donation to the Anglican Chaplaincy at the University of Sheffield - or perhaps remember us when your PCC is thinking of missionary and charitable giving. Cheques should be made payable to 'Anglican Chaplaincy Trust.'

For information about standing orders and Gift Aid, please contact the Treasurer, Nigel Russell-Sewell, via bnbr-life@shef.ac.uk or 0114 222 8923.

