

The Archbishop of York will be visiting the [Diocese of Blackburn](#) for a weekend of mission and ministry from Friday 27 to Sunday 29 May.

During his visit to the County, Archbishop Stephen will travel widely; from Burnley and Whalley to Lancaster and the Fylde Coast. The Rt Rev Julian Henderson, the Bishop of Blackburn, anticipates it will be a 'joyous and exciting' three days.



Archbishop Stephen has sent a greeting to everyone in Lancashire in advance of his visit and you can watch it [here](#).

While in Lancashire the Archbishop will also hear about the incredible work to grow churches which is happening all over the County, as part of the ongoing '[Vision 2026](#) Healthy Churches Transforming Communities'.

Several key events will be open to the public across the three days and all are welcome. They include a mission event at Blackpool Pleasure Beach Globe Arena starting at 7pm on Saturday evening and an open-air service at [Whalley Abbey](#) starting at 7.30pm on Friday evening.

Meanwhile, at 10.30am on Sunday morning, all are welcome at [Blackburn Cathedral](#) where the Archbishop will also lead a service to celebrate the 900 years of service to their communities by three churches in the Diocese. These churches are St Mary Magdalene, Clitheroe; St Bartholomew, Colne and St Peter, Burnley; an amazing 2700 years of service between them!

While open to all, the 10.30am service will also be livestreamed on the Cathedral YouTube channel for anyone who can't make it in person. You can find the link to the channel via the [Cathedral](#) website homepage. The Archbishop will also lead the Cathedral Parish Communion service earlier on Sunday at 9am.

There are many other events as part of a packed agenda for the Archbishop. On Friday he will visit [Lancaster University](#) with the Bishop of Lancaster, Rt Rev. Dr Jill Duff, for discussions on several topics including one with local schools to discuss racial justice and another on their 'University of Sanctuary' innovation, which welcomes asylum seekers and refugees into the university community.

Later, he will be spending the afternoon in Burnley with the Bishop of Burnley, Rt Rev. Philip North, meeting with faith and civic leaders at [Burnley College](#), all of whom will all be sharing something of their organisations' contributions to the common good across this vibrant northern town.

Later, Archbishop Stephen will also visit the Ghausia Mosque and St Peter's Church in Burnley.

On Friday evening at 7.30pm it's the Whalley Abbey service, and this event will also include a blessing by the Archbishop for the work of the new Centre of Christian Discipleship and Prayer based at the Abbey. Visit the Abbey website for more information about the Centre.

Immediately preceding the service, members of the Abbey Steering Group will be joined by Archbishop Stephen for a prayer walk in the grounds led by the Archdeacon of Blackburn, The Venerable Mark Ireland and Rev. Adam Thomas, Whalley Abbey Director.

On Saturday, the Archbishop will be on the Fylde Coast where he will attend a Faith and Science Event at [St Thomas' Blackpool](#) at 10.30am; a half-term Holiday Weekend Beach Mission from 1pm in Jubilee Park, North Promenade; a street prayer mission outside [St John's, Blackpool](#) at 4pm and finally moving on to the Pleasure Beach leading the mission event at the Pleasure Beach from 7pm.

Then on Sunday, the Archbishop will lead the two services at the County's Anglican Cathedral in Blackburn before heading back to York.

Archbishop Stephen said today: "I am hugely looking forward to coming to Lancashire this weekend as together we share our stories of faith; encourage others to come and find out more about the love of God as seen in Jesus and how lives can be transformed as we follow him.

"I am also looking forward to hearing more about the work going on across the diocese to fulfil the ambitions and aims of Vision 2026 Healthy Churches Transforming Communities.

"I invite you to join me and to join in; particularly as I lead the mission event at Blackpool Pleasure Beach – which is for anyone who wants to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ."

Bishop Julian added: "Archbishop Stephen is seeking to visit each diocese in the Northern Province for three days in the coming years and I am delighted that we will be the first to welcome him as he does so.

"During his time with us Archbishop Stephen will be visiting as much of our diocese as is possible. We anticipate some joyous and exciting moments across a busy schedule!

"We are praying particularly that God will use his visit to open doors and that people will hear God's call in their lives through the Gospel message."

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