

The Church must rediscover its true purpose

SIR – The purpose of the Church of England is to offer worship. The more it allows churches to be used for other reasons ([Letters, January 5](#)), the more it portrays this purpose as peripheral.

The number of worshippers will only grow if the Church recovers its understanding of its central purpose.

David J Critchley

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SIR – Sir Tony Baldry ([Letters, January 5](#)) is right to highlight the needs of rural churches, but even more concerning is the closure of churches in poor inner-city areas. A report by the Church Buildings Council in 2020 showed that churches in the most deprived parishes are more likely to close than those in prosperous areas.

Yet it is precisely in poorer places that the community assistance provided by churches – such as food banks, youth groups, and drug, alcohol and mental health support – is most needed. At the National Churches Trust, we will do everything we can to support church buildings, and we urge the Government and bodies such as the National Heritage Lottery Fund to step up their support.

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SIR – On a trip back to my birth city, Norwich, I drove from the suburbs to the city centre by a familiar route. I passed eight closed pubs. Most of the churches appeared to be functioning.

The spirit ecclesiastical seems to be faring better than the spirit temporal.

Rod Corke

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