Diocese welcomes Bishop Michael

Bishop Michael was consecrated in Westminster Abbey on Ascension Day, 14th May and welcomed to the diocese on Saturday, 16th May, in a service at St Albans Cathedral.

Lord Williams of Oystermouth, formerly Archbishop of Canterbury, preached at the consecration about the expectation on priests and bishops to be the good news, but that, fortunately, they did not need to achieve this in their own strength. Indeed, they could not, he said, recalling the words of the ordinal: ‘You cannot bear the weight of this calling in your own strength, but only by the grace and power of God. Pray therefore that your heart may daily be enlarged and your understanding of the Scriptures enlightened.’

There was a good turnout of support from across the diocese on a very wet Ascension Day.

Two day later, at St Albans Cathedral, Bishop Michael was welcomed to the diocese and placed by the Dean in his stall in the cathedral.

As is customary, Bishop Michael preached at this service. He picked as his theme ‘Are you the one who is to come or should we expect another?’ describing this as Luke’s immortal line for the welcome of a new bishop.

He continued: “John’s words speak of God’s
extraordinary graciousness to us. God doesn’t railroad us, force us into following him. Rather God woos us, invites us in the freedom of our hearts to come to know him and to love him – a love so free it even embraces doubt in someone as usually assured as John the Baptist. God’s graciousness is echoed by Jesus’ response to John’s disciples. Jesus could have replied with an answer that left them knocked flat – “Yes, I am the one who is to come”. But instead, like a good teacher, Jesus gives the disciples the means to answer their question for themselves and then stands back to let them work it out in the freedom of their hearts.

Jesus makes the same invitation to us and I’m looking forward so much to working alongside you in this place as we seek to respond to him together.

He asked us to ask ourselves: “When has Jesus given us insight, led us to health and wholeness, met us in the poverty of grief and raised us up? Part of the vision of this diocese is to transform communities. I’m looking forward to joining with you in Jesus’ work of changing the world – through Foodbanks and Street Pastors, our care of the sick and lonely, the nurture of children in our church schools, the aid we offer to those displaced through war or disaster.”

The crowds followed John because he spoke for God, took people deep into the word of God, and lived a life that was 100% consistent with the message he preached. Part of the vision of this diocese is to go deeper into God – increasingly to recognise God’s presence within us and around us, helping us lead lives of integrity that are at one with him. I’m looking forward to learning with you how to live out a faith so grounded in God’s deep reality that it’s more than capable of engaging with anything it encounters – our most urgent needs, our hardest questions, our gravest doubts, our darkest fears. I look forward to being with you as Christ leads us into reality and truth.

Together, I believe that these aspects of our lives will help us fulfil the final part of this place – making disciples, speaking out of the confidence of our experience, the transformations we have seen and heard, the depth we have encountered, in order to invite, encourage, enable and resource others onto the journey of following Jesus.

It is an astonishing privilege to have been called to become the Bishop of Hertford in this Diocese of St Albans. Am I the one who is to come, or should you expect another? As was said in the consecration service that took place on Thursday, no one can bear the weight of this calling in their own strength, but only by the grace and power of God. So I come to you grateful to have been called, seeking to serve you not in my own strength but God’s, and eager to experience and explore alongside you what it means to follow the one who calls not just me but all of us; Jesus Christ. To him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

Read or hear the full version of Bishop Michael’s sermon: http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/bishop-of-hertford-s-sermons/

See photos of his consecration and welcome: https://picasaweb.google.com/akataria001
SIM’s 25 years of offering support

Support in Your Ministry (SIM) recently celebrated its 25th anniversary, supporting clergy and others in the diocese. This achievement was marked recently at special meetings of SIM Assistants and guests at St Paul’s, St Albans and St Nicholas’, Barton-le-Clay. Philip Habershon, (top centre) Chair of the SIM Management Group, paid tribute to all those who had contributed to SIM over the past 25 years, and read a letter from Bishop Alan in which he highlighted the vital part SIM will continue to play in the work of Living God’s Love in the diocese.

SIM Assistants, who now number about 70 (some ordained, others lay volunteers) provide a listening ministry to accredited ministers (clergy, readers, youth workers, etc), churchwardens and their partners in the diocese. They offer support, time for reflection, and provide challenge and encouragement in an entirely confidential setting. SIM complements mentoring, counselling and spiritual direction schemes. One User of the scheme has commented, “I have made use of SIM for over twenty years and during this period have been supported by three different SIM Assistants. Each of them has helped me to reflect upon my ministry and they have assisted me with trying to discern the most effective way to follow God’s call in a number of different situations. I find that the SIM sessions go very quickly and I return to my parish feeling encouraged to continue. I would certainly recommend the scheme to others.”

SIM is always looking for new Users and Assistants. If you would like to know more, please follow this link to the diocesan website: http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/ministry/support-in-your-ministry/ or contact Revd Clare Baynes (01727 875524 or clarebaynes @gmail.com).
Would you like to join churches across the diocese and become an ‘Alban Angel Church’?

By joining Alban’s Angels, your church will provide valuable support to the cathedral, which sits at the heart of the diocese, as it takes forward a once-in-a-generation project – ‘Alban, Britain’s First Saint: Telling the Whole Story’.

‘Alban, Britain’s First Saint’ is the true and little known story of Alban’s journey to faith. As we welcome visitors to the cathedral, telling this story gives people a glimpse of the power of the Christian faith that has sustained the cathedral as the oldest site of continuous Christian worship in Britain, from over 1700 years ago to today - and into the future.

A new welcome centre, learning centre and telling of Alban’s story, along with improved visitor facilities and access, will transform the cathedral’s national profile and secure its future to the benefit of us all.

We are inviting churches, individuals and organisations to join Alban’s Angels and help realise this vision. We will install an ‘Angel Cloud’ in the cathedral’s crossing, and for everyone who joins Alban’s Angels, we will add an angel to recognise your gift. Please visit the cathedral to see the angels as they grow in number!

Churches can join Alban’s Angels for a suggested donation of £100 or more, and individuals can join from £25. Gifts will be acknowledged by adding the name of your church, or the name of an individual, to the Alban’s Angels website, and by adding the following angel to the cloud:

- £25 - a white angel
- £50 - a gold angel
- £100 - a pair of angels, with a personalised message. Personalised messages could include the name of your church, the name of an individual or a short message in celebration or in memory of a loved one.

To become an Alban Angel, please visit www.albansangels.org or contact the cathedral’s Development Office on: appeal@stalbanscathedral.org or 01727 890229.
Healing conference draws 27 churches from around the diocese

Churches include prayers for the sick in their weekly intercessions, but the theological introduction to Common Worship pastoral services of wholeness and healing goes further: “Healing, reconciliation and restoration are integral to the good news of Jesus Christ. For this reason, prayer for individuals, focused through laying on of hands or anointing with oil, has a proper place within the public prayer of the Church. God’s gracious activity of healing is to be seen both as part of the proclaiming of the good news and as an outworking of the presence of the Spirit in the life of the Church.”

Bishop Alan encourages churches to hold regular services where healing ministry is offered in a manner appropriate for their tradition and healing ministry is increasingly offered as part of worship in our churches.

Twenty-seven churches brought forty people to take part in a conference teaching about healing ministry within one tradition, at St Paul’s Church, St Albans in April, where a team of people, including laity, offers healing ministry.

The conference was led by Ed Rocha, a Brazilian Pastor, invited by Canon Tony Hurle, Vicar of St Paul’s. Tony was motivated by the knowledge that in Latin American, Asian and African countries as many as 80-90 per-cent of first generation Christians attribute their conversions primarily to having received divine healing for themselves or a family member (‘Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing’ (OUP 2011)). As many people no longer have a cultural, educational or childhood acquaintance with Christianity, this is for making new disciples.

Speaking to SeeRound Online during the conference, Ed Rocha said that he had found people from the diocese attending his sessions hungry for knowledge and thankful for what they had received in the way of teaching as well as healing. Ed has been teaching and practising healing ministry for 20 years, ten of which were spent with Randy Clark, also a pastor in Brazil, who was his mentor. Ed has been on a long journey thinking about and learning about healing, which he sees as fundamentally about practising and sharing God’s love. He and Randy have seen many instances of healing and Randy has written a PhD about evidence of healing that can be tested.

Tony Hurle added: “Ed’s journey has been very helpful to us at St Paul’s. He involves everyone and there was a good balance between quiet and joy in the conference sessions.”

Ed sees the ministry of healing as a gift to build up the body of Christ in faith. He sees one of the key results of teaching about healing ministry being the raising of expectations that healings can take place, something that is seen often in other parts of the world more than in Western Europe. When people offer testimony of healing, this is also an up-building encouragement for others.

A key passage of scripture Ed uses to help raise expectations of healings is the story of the crowd pressing in to touch Jesus at Genessaret, in Matthew 14, where the crowd sought him and “begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.” He encouraged people to pray commanding, authoritative prayers for healing and to use oil to anoint. He says when praying for people - they are not all healed but he wants everyone prayed for to feel loved.

Ed is also aware that healing ministry is controversial to some. His answer is simple: “Don’t judge every ministry and don’t take offence at some of God’s people.”
Buy together, save together – new Parish Buying booklet launched!

Buy together,
Save together

The Church of England’s buying service: pooling the buying power of the national church to provide savings for the local church.

Saving you time and money to spend on mission and ministry.

Last month Parish Buying launched their brand new booklet. It tells you everything you need to know about Parish Buying, complete with information on their products, tips on procurement, and lots of wonderful feedback from members who have loved using Parish Buying. As a reminder, they’re a service run by the CofE to help you save money (and time!) on key spend areas – so it can go back to where it matters most – mission & ministry. So well worth a look.

They’ve sent the booklet out via the Dioceses so you might have already seen it. If you have and you’ve found it useful, let them (and us!) know about it. The team at Parish Buying worked hard to make these booklets a useful resource for parishes, so we know they’d love to hear your thoughts. If you haven’t received one, you might be getting one soon – they’re still being sent. In fact, demand for it was so high they had to do another print-run!

If you’d like to take a look, they’ve got a pdf version on their website. It’s well worth a look. You might be surprised at what else they can help you with – we’ll let you in on a secret – it’s not just energy!

Take a look.
ON THE MOVE for May/June 2015

The Diocese of St Albans in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Luton & Barnet

Clergy

Julie Anne Gawthorpe, presently Associate Vicar at St John’s Church, Cambridge in Ely Diocese, is to become Team Vicar in the Ash & Quin Valleys Team Ministry.

Rachel Gibson, presently Associate Vicar at St Andrew, Chorleywood is to become Rector at St Clements, Oxford, in Oxford Diocese.

Dr Jan Goodair, presently Chaplain at Haberdashers’ Aske’s Boys School is to become Chaplain at Pocklington School in York Diocese.

Anthony Giles, presently Priest-in-charge in the benefice of High Wych and Gilston with Eastwick is to become Rector of the same.

Jeni McQuaid, presently Curate in Training SSM in Hitchin Team Ministry has changed status to half stipend.

Susan Marsh, Associate Team Minister (SSM) in the Bishop’s Hatfield Team Ministry has retired.

Jocelyn Perris, presently Curate in Training at St Peter, St Albans has had a change of title to Associate Priest/Missioner for Young Families.

Andrew Reid, Curate in Training at St Andrew, Chorleywood, has come to the end of his curacy.

Area Dean of St Albans

The Revd Mark Slater has taken on the role of Area Dean of St Albans and the Revd Lynne Fawns will continue as Assistant Area Dean.

Obituaries

The Rt Revd Cornell Moss, Bishop of Guyana died on 30th May. Speaking of Bishop Cornell, the Bishop of Bedford, said: “I am deeply saddened to hear of the loss of Bishop Cornell who was a good friend to our diocese. My prayers are with his wife, Carol, and family. Following my visit to his diocese last year, I will be holding the whole church there in my prayers at this difficult time as they seek to discern the future together.”

David Warren, Reader at St Paul’s Church, St Albans died on 23rd May.

Miscellaneous Events

Across Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire

OPEN CHURCH SUNDAY

Sunday 21 June 2015

Come and visit your local church and meet the community!

Flower Festivals

Cream teas Open Gardens

Teddy Bear parouching
Mini Concerts and Recitals
Many beautiful churches to explore
and much, much more....

For more information and an interactive map, visit:
www.openchurchsunday.co.uk

Retreat Association Conference

22-25 June 2015

Holding a Balance – finding God in a complex world

Come and be inspired at our forthcoming major conference, where we explore some of the complex challenges that face us in our modern world – and how to respond to them. Guest contributors include our patrons Dr Rowan Williams, Fr Christopher Jamison OSB, Margaret Rizza and Revd Graham Sparkes. Other key contributors include theologian and writer Iain McGilchrist, artist Sophie Hacker, poet Pádraig Ó Tuama and liturgist Emily Walker. The conference takes place at The Hayes, Swanwick and will include talks, workshops, worship and reflection, with opportunities to network and take part in creative activities. All are welcome at this celebration of Christian spirituality.

For further information and bookings please see http://www.retreats.org.uk/conference2015.html email info@retreats.org.uk tel 01494 569056.

On Sunday, May 24th members of the Borehamwood community gathered at St. Michael & All Angels Church for a Farewell Songs of Praise to say goodbye to a much loved member of the community – The Reverend Canon Richard Leslie. Pictured above from left to right Rebecca Challice, and her partner Richard Butler, Elstree and Borehamwood Town Mayor, Archdeacon The Venerable Dr. Trevor Jones, Rev. Canon Richard Leslie, Area Dean The Rev. Michael Burn, The Borough Deputy Mayor Peter Routledge and the Deputy Mayoress Jane West.
St Andrew’s Church Bedford. A musical drama ‘All the King’s Men’ based on Humpty Dumpty featuring Newnham Middle School, Fusion Choir and local singers/musicians on Saturday 6th June at 5pm and 7.30pm. Advanced Tickets £9/£8, 16-21 £4, U16 free with paying adult. Tickets from box office on 01234 216891, or musa@standrewsbedford.org.

St Leonard’s Church, Bengeo, Hertford Saturday 6th June at 7.30pm, Emily Andrews, flute and David Massey, guitar, recital including works by Schubert, Mozart and Takemitsu. Also Saturday 4th July at 7.30 pm, the Artesian Quartet (Kate Suthers and Emily Davis, violins, Matthew Maguire, viola and Antonio Novais, cello) with guest musicians from The Royal Academy of Music will work with Schubert, Dvorak, Haydn & Strauss. Tickets are £12 (Friends of St. Leonard’s members £10), including refreshments. Reservations 01992 551798.

Luton Library Theatre, St George’s Square, Luton LU1 2BQ Berakah Concert on Sunday 7th June at 6:30pm (Doors Open) - Band on Stage at 7pm. The Berakah Project unites musicians from Jewish, Christian and Muslim faiths with a mixture of World Music, Jazz, Blues and traditional elements from Europe and the Middle East. It is free concert, but you need a ticket with seat number for entrance, email admiringgrassroots@btconnect.com or phone on 01582 416946.

Holy Saviour Church, Radcliffe Road, Hitchin. A 150th Anniversary Songs of Praise Sunday 6th June at 6pm. Come and sing your favourite hymns, accompanied by Holy Saviour Church Choir, The Radcliffe Singers, The Buccinate Brass Ensemble directed by Trevor Hughes. Introduced by Pamm Rhodes. Admission Free, including refreshments. A retiring collection will be taken in aid of Holy Saviour Church.

St Thomas’s Church, Stopsley, Luton Male Voice Choir Concert on Saturday 13th June at 7.30pm. Tickets £8 (Inc. Refreshments) available from Bill Forrester 01582 612116, Dave Bowen 01582 752875 or on the door.

The Muse, Watford School of Music, Watford Grammar School for Boys, WD18 7JA Radlett Choral Society - Music for a summer evening, Saturday 13th June, 7.30pm. Home-made puddings and cakes served in interval! Programme includes famous Italian opera choruses; folk songs; spirituals and popular songs from the 20th century. RCS will be joined by star tenor Greg Tassell. Tickets £12 from 01923 226836 or at the door.

Cheshunt Free Church, 27 High Street, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, EN8 0BS Riding Lights Roughshod 2015, the community touring arm of Riding Lights Theatre Company, will be performing its new show IRRESISTible in Cheshunt for part of its national tour on Wednesday 24th June, 8.00pm, Box Office: 07757 811050 Tickets: £7.

All Saints Church Berkhamsted are holding a Singing Day on Saturday 27th June, at 10.30am with coffee until about 3.30pm after an act of worship. Come and sing familiar and new hymns from new book Singing the Faith. This day is a chance to improve your singing under the expert guidance of Robin Walker, choir conductor and organist. For info and to book, please contact Chris Billington email: christinabill@virginmedia.com tel:01442 385566. Suggested donation - £5 on the day. Lunch provided.

St Mary’s Church, Hitchin. Concert conducted by Anne-Marie Hetherington and featuring Buccinate Brass on Thursday 26th June at 7.30pm. The programme will include works from the Monteverdi Heinrich Schutz, Purcell and The Song of Agincourt arranged by choir member Martin Leadbetter. Tickets £12/£10 please visit: www.orpheusnorthertons.com.

St Margaret’s Church, Streatley will be holding their Annual Church Fete on Saturday 6th June at 2pm at Streatley Village Hall and Field. Band, Various Stalls and games. Admission £1

Churches Together In Harrold And Carlton. Carlton Open Gardens & Scarecrow Festival. Sunday 7th June 1.30pm – 5.30pm. Tickets & teas at Carlton Village Hall Adults £4, Under 12s free.

St Mary’s Church, Essendon (B158). Gardens Open Day on Sunday 14th June, 11.30am-5pm. Many beautiful private gardens open, lunches and teas available, Church tower trips with stunning views. Various stalls, £6 adults, children 50p.

St Wiston’s Church, Sandy. Flower Festival “Glorious Bedfordshire” Saturday 20th June 10am - 5pm, Sunday, 21st June 12 noon - 5pm. Open Church Sunday. 21st June. Enjoy a unique view of Sandy from the Church Tower (weather permitting). Cream teas in the Church Rooms on both days.

All Saints Church Tilsworth, Summer Fete in the grounds of Tilsworth Manor on Saturday 27th June 2pm-4.30pm

St Andrew’s Church, Cuffley, Open Art Exhibition and Quilt Display as part of the 50th Jubilee celebrations on Friday 26th and Saturday 27th June. Further details from Wendy Keeling Taylor via email wendy.keeling@ntlworld.com.

Services

St Mary’s Church, Redbourne. Meeting of the St Albans branch Prayer Book Society. Evensong followed by drinks 6.30pm, Sunday 7th June. All welcome.

Whipsnade Tree Cathedral Service. A special service for the 70th Commemoration of V.E. Day led by the Rector, the Revd Nicola Lenthal. Sunday 14th June at 3 pm. Preacher: The Right Revd John Gladwin, supported by The Royal British Legion with the Salvation Army Band. Bring your own chairs or rugs and a picnic tea. Further information 01582 872406.