Harvest Appeal launches with Bedfordshire school water-relay

Pupils at Holywell School, Cranfield, helped launch the Bishop of St Albans’ Harvest Appeal 2016, the annual appeal which raises around £60,000 for a charity working in a developing country each year.

This year, the appeal is working in partnership with Water Aid, supporting their ‘Life-Giving Water’ campaign in Madagascar, providing safe, clean water to families in the Bongalava region of the country.

Internationally, 1 in 10 people lack access to clean, safe water and average daily water usage is only 10 litres a day. Much of this is far from clean and carried by young girls, who don’t get to school. Access to toilets is also an issue which affects water safety and good hygiene: about a third of the world’s population don’t have access to a toilet and this also impacts privacy and safety, especially for women. Worldwide, unsafe water kills about 900 children a day.

In Bongalava, the need is particularly acute: fewer than 1 in 5 families have access to safe water, and fewer than 1 in 10 have access to toilets.

Bishop Richard and Jeremy Pearce, the diocese’s World Development Adviser, connected pupils with the Madagascan people’s need for water through helping them to make these comparisons and then using cake and water to help drive the message home.

They explained that daily water usage in the UK is about 12 times that in Madagascar and is clean and safe. They told stories about young people in Madagascar who are coping with scarce, unsafe water. They also learnt that Madagascar is the world’s major producer of vanilla and were invited to enjoy a vanilla cupcake from dozens iced in the red, white and green of the Madagascan flag.

Finally, they took part in a water relay, passing ten litres of water, cup by cup along a line of eighty children to fill a ten-litre container at the other end. They saw how much water is lost in this process and how carrying water this way is very slow and inefficient - the world record for passing water in this way is 17 minutes and sadly, it was not broken at Holywell School.

BREAKING NEWS: the 2015 Harvest Appeal: “Building Hope” raised £59,236 for children with disabilities in Uganda, funding improved dormitory facilities for 30 children in new and renovated accommodation as well as providing ramps and other access equipment. Bishop Alan sent congratulations and thanks to all who donated and raised funds.
Bishop’s Letter

Time at Taizé

At the start of August this year, I’ll be travelling with a group of about 20 young people from across our diocese on a pilgrimage to Taizé, an international Christian community of about 100 brothers in France. The visit is being supported by a number of leaders from around our diocese who’ve generously stepped up to enable the trip to happen. Founded out of the conflict of WWII, Taizé is an extraordinary place. Each week it offers several thousand young people from around the world time and space to breathe, to listen, to think and to live for a while to the beat of heaven. People that go to Taizé often say it’s an experience that’s changed their lives.

Time at Taizé is about searching, listening and thinking about what it means to be a human being, and how we can do something to bring justice, peace and hope to our world. Taizé provides a space where young adults can meet people their age from other countries and talk about important things. Three times a day everyone gathers with the brothers of the community in the church at Taizé for prayer with songs, a scripture reading and silence. Multiple languages are used. Each day, the brothers introduce a biblical reflection followed by a time of discussion in small groups – a feat of translation that somehow always seems to work out. In the afternoon there are workshops which explore themes of faith and life touching on work, society, art and culture, social justice, world peace... Between the meals and times of prayer there is plenty of free time, socialising and spontaneous entertainment. Nothing is compulsory about Taizé – everyone takes part in as much or as little as they want and the experience is designed to help people identify their own questions and seek out their own answers – there is no party line. At Taizé everyone pitches in, so we’ll be volunteering to serve meals, wash-up and keep the site tidy. We’re travelling to Taizé on an overnight bus. We’ll be camping, eating out of plastic bowls, staying up late and spend a great deal of time singing, talking and listening to each other. It’s going to be quite an experience!

It’s said that no one who has been to Taizé comes back unchanged. I hope that will be the experience of our St Albans group – that we’ll be challenged, encouraged, stretched and surprised. Please do pray for us as we go on our way – we’re looking forward to reporting back on our return!

Dr Michael Beasley, Bishop of Hertford

Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

16-25 May, 2017

The pilgrimage will be led by the Venerable Paul Hughes, Archdeacon of Bedford and Canon Liz Hughes, Senior Luton Airport Chaplain. With five nights in Jerusalem and four nights in Tiberias by the Sea of Galilee, the trip includes many principal holy sites such as the Mount of Olives, Bethlehem, Nazareth, The Garden of Gethsemane and much more. The cost of the tour is £1745 and full details can be found here:

www.stalbanspilgrimages.org.uk/fpilgrimages.html
The Diocese of St Albans has a new logo, about a decade after it was last redesigned. The new logo incorporates the words ‘Living God’s Love’ into the design and is based on the familiar script in use since 2010. The logo has been created from the outset to be used alongside existing branding used by the parishes, schools and chaplaincies of the diocese. This has been made possible by evolving the current use of curved headers and footers and the creation of a set of rules for using the new logo which govern its placing and the colours to be used. These will be freely available to parishes. The logo appears in four versions to make it flexible and adaptable to a variety of uses. It is hoped that parishes will want to use the style on service sheets and other parish materials. It will also be available for use on noticeboards. The logo is featured for the first time on the front of the new Diocesan Annual Report which will be distributed during June.

The Diocese of St Albans in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Luton & Barnet
SeeRound Online June 2016/05
www.stalbans.anglican.org/news/seeround

Logo puts Living God’s Love in the foreground

Living God’s Love – countdown to autumn

All our deaneries are beginning to plan their autumn visit of a bishop, when we will be seeking inspiration and encouragement together to Live God’s Love. The dates are fixed – see www.stalbans.anglican.org/faith/living-god-s-love/ or this month’s bundle to find your deanery’s date. Our bishops are looking forward to being with people in every deanery and to helping us to explore new ideas for reaching out in our mission to show and share God’s love. Every deanery is different – so each will have its own ideas and create an individual programme, but this will probably include a visit to a school and an opportunity to meet with people who are involved in projects or groups which aim to grow our churches, for example, pre-school groups, or young people’s groups on Sundays or mid-week, or activities for older folk. Perhaps there could be a mission opportunity for the bishop to meet people on a high street or village square and engage with our local people in talking about faith and God. Could you come together with a group of people with a shared focus to discover good ideas which might help your parish to grow? Do you have other ideas and want to get involved in planning the visit? Talk to your parish clergy or your Rural Dean and see how you might be able to contribute.
The Art of Compassion

This spring, the Diocesan Schools Team ran an art competition among our 136 church schools, on the theme: ‘Compassion’.

The competition entries showed a great variety of interpretation and the winning entry came from a year 8 pupil, Elliot Swinburne, from Edward Peake Middle School in Biggleswade. Deemed outstanding by all the judges his depiction of hands stretched out in darkness is arresting and beautifully executed, see above.

There were four ‘Highly Commended’ works, including this one (aside) by Kacey Perry from Reception in St Nicholas’ Primary School, Elstree.
The other three ‘Highly Commended’ works were by:

**Millie Boxall** in Year 6 at St Michael’s Primary School in Bishop’s Stortford, *(image and her text in support of her entry top left).*

**Jasmyn Gooding** in Year 9 at All Saints Academy Dunstable, *(image and her text in support of her entry top right).*

**Hannah Smith** in Year 3 at Thomas Coram School in Berkhamsted, *(image aside).*

Winners received gift vouchers for art supplies. Well done to all artists!
The Archbishops' initiative, 'Thy Kingdom Come,' focused on Making New Disciples, drew enthusiastic responses from churches all over the diocese who were really keen to facilitate as much prayer as possible during the week leading up to Pentecost. St Andrew's, Bedford, opened the church for prayer at noon each day in the week, but made the services, specially devised, available for download so that they could be used by church members wherever they were. St Mary's, Eaton Socon, opened the church 24 hours a day and divided the week into one-hour slots from 8 am on Monday 9th until 6:30pm pm Friday 13 May. They asked people to sign up. There was only one stretch of three hours not covered over one night. The week finished with a service of celebration on Friday evening. St Mary’s, Baldock showed the prayer knots video and gave everyone a leather shoelace asking them to commit to pray daily to pray for 5 people they knew to become Christians. Holy Cross, Sarratt's participation in the Archbishops’ call to prayer was to put up a number of prayer stations on the Lord’s Prayer in the church. The Rector of Sarratt and Chipperfield, the Revd Michelle du Saire said: “We decided to keep them up for a further week.” In the rural benefice of Cople, Moggerhanger and Willington they had special Morning Prayers during the week, and an ecumenical evening prayer walk through Willington. At Holy Trinity, Leverstock Green, the Study and Nurture group created a prayer trail using materials from the www.thykingdom.co.uk website. It was open on the Saturday for people to use independently, with music playing and welcome on hand, and the regular coffee shop and Traidcraft stall in action. Hertford St Andrew and St Mary’s Hertingfordbury created six interactive stations which help tell the story of Pentecost through the themes of Waiting, Telling, Sharing, Receiving, Doing and Growing. The Revd Alan Stewart, Team Vicar of both churches, said: “Our churches’ mission is ‘Know the Story, Share the Story, Live the Story’. It’s been a great opportunity for our congregations to help Share the Story through sourcing props, preparing craft, decorating stations, welcoming, leading sessions… so many people have had the opportunity to explore gifts they didn’t know they had! It’s been a wonderful experience which has really helped to build relationships with our church schools and the feedback has been so positive and encouraging.’ (See image above).
People around the Diocese

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

Clergy Appointments

**Virginia (Ginni) Dear**, presently Assistant Curate in Hertford Team Ministry is to become Vicar in the benefice of St Ippolyts with Great & Little Wymondley.

**Jane Dicker**, presently Team Vicar (with special responsibility for Christ Church Waltham Cross) is to become Vicar in the benefice of All Saints, West Bromwich, in Lichfield Diocese.

**Jenny Hill**, presently Team Rector (with special responsibility for St Mary’s Old Town and St Paul’s Highfield) and Diocesan Advisor for Women’s Ministry is to retire to Oakington, Cambridgeshire next month.

**Canon Dr Tony Sellers**, presently Vicar of St Paul’s Church, Luton and Assistant Rural Dean, will be retiring in November.

**Dr Peter Waddell**, presently Dean of Chapel at the University of Winchester, is to become Priest-in-Charge/Incumbent Designate in the benefice of Abbots Langley.

SIM Chair steps down

After many years of guiding and developing Support in your Ministry (SIM), Philip Habershon has stepped down as Chairman. Under Philip’s wise and dedicated leadership, the Scheme recently celebrated its 25th anniversary and now provides confidential support to over 100 clergy, readers, other ministers and their partners. In recognition of this service, Philip was recently awarded the Order of St Alban. Although stepping down from management duties, he will continue as a SIM Assistant.

Bishop Alan has asked Chris Swain to succeed Philip as Chairman. For more details about SIM, please visit: www.stalbans.anglican.org/ministry/support-in-your-ministry/.

Reader Anniversary Celebration

On Saturday 29th October there will be a celebration of Reader Ministry for all Readers in the Eastern Region, taking place in Ely from 9.30am to 4.00pm.

This should be a superb day and a fitting focus for this special year when we are marking the 150th anniversary of Reader ministry in the Church of England.

Workshops will be held in the morning, led by excellent speakers including Debbie Thrower, Suzanne Luther and the Revd Dave Male, on topics such as ministry to the elderly, pioneer ministry and fresh expressions - and the day will culminate in a service of celebration in the magnificent Ely Cathedral in the early afternoon.

This will be a great opportunity for Readers across St Albans Diocese to meet with fellow Readers from our neighbouring dioceses in the Eastern region.

Further details will be available on the Readers section of the diocesan website in due course.

Church Architecture Awards

The National Churches Trust and the Ecclesiastical Architects and Surveyors Association are inviting entries for two top church architecture awards. New church buildings and new designs in church alterations or extensions can be entered for The Presidents’ Award. Innovative, high quality church conservation or repair work can be entered for The King of Prussia Gold Medal. The winning two churches or chapels will receive a £500 prize.

The submission deadline is 31st July 2016. A shortlist will be announced in September and winners revealed at a special awards ceremony held in London in November 2016.

Nominations can come from anyone with a passion for great church architecture. Visit www.nationalchurchestrust.org/architectureawards.


**Concerts & Drama**

**St Peter's Church, St Albans.** Bridgewater Sinfonia concert featuring works by Rossini, R. Strauss and Sibelius is on **Saturday 18th June** at 7.30pm. Tickets £16, £15 in advance, U18s free. Call 01442 873205 or visit www.bridgewater-sinfonia.org.uk

**St Mary's Church, St Albans.** Evensong with ‘Chaplains in WW1: Faith Flowers’ at 7pm. Details from www.handlebards.org.uk. To find out more visit www.bridgewater-sinfonia.org.uk

**St Mary’s Church, Stevington, Bedford.** Songs on a summer evening by Cantamus Chamber Choir, with conductor Gary Mudd, on **Saturday 2nd July** at 7.30pm. Programme of songs from Scotland, Shakespeare and others, with summer themes, to be sung in this beautiful ancient North Bedfordshire church. Tickets £7.50 from Community Shop or on the door. Proceeds to church funds.

**St James the Apostle, Bushey.** Saturday Recital Series. 12 noon for 45 minutes. Cakes and coffee available beforehand and light lunches afterwards served at Church House. **2nd July** - Pupils from Purcell School **9th July** - Kings Langley Community Choir. **16th July** - Huw Rhys Evans (Tenor) & Neil Kelley (piano) **23rd June** - Philip Drew (organ) **30th July** - Rebecca Jabbar. (contralto) www.bushey parish.org.uk.

**St Albans Church, Warners End Road, Hemel Hempstead.** Patronal Festival Weekend **18th-19th June.** Saturday: Summer fete, 10am – 2pm with stalls including, Home-Made Cakes, Books, Crafts & Bric-a-Brac, plus the first ever Warners End Scalectrix Grand Prix! Sunday 4pm ‘Songs of Praise’ BBC Style. Come and sing! Refreshments afterwards. Admission free, just give us your voice!

**St Laurence Church, Wormley EN10 7QF.** Flower Festival with the theme: ‘A Church for all Seasons’. **Saturday 18th June** 10am - 5pm with Raffle, stalls and refreshments. **Sunday 19th June** 11.30am - 5pm and **Monday 20th June** 11am - 2pm. Refreshments available.

**St Mary's Church, Hitchin.** Flowers and Wedding Dresses through the ages. Preview Evening on **Friday 24th June** from 7.30pm to 9.30pm with a glass of bubbly, Enjoy the displays, cheese and wine and live music. Tickets in advance at £15. **Saturday 25th June** (10-6pm) and **Sunday 26th June** (12-4pm). Music, refreshments and tower tours. Admission £5 (children free). Contact margaret.khinmaung@gmail.com.

**St Peter’s Church, Benington, Nr Stevenage.** Flower Festival - ‘All the World’s a Stage’. Village gardens are open, lunches and teas available. Local produce for sale. **Saturday 25th -Sunday 26th June**, noon until 5pm.

**St Lawrence Church, High Street, Abbots Langley, WD5 0AS.** Flower Festival on **Friday 8th** - **Sunday 10th July**. The theme is ‘The Queen and Commonwealth’ in recognition of Her Majesty’s 90th birthday. Entrance is by suggested donation £2 pp, children free (with accompanying adult). Refreshments available throughout. Visit www.abbotslangley.org.uk.

**Special Services**

**Whipsnade Tree Cathedral Service** on **Saturday 12th June** at 3pm, led by Revd Nichola Lenthall, Preacher is Revd Canon Liz Hughes. The Salvation Army Band will accompany the Children of Kensworth and Studham Schools. Please bring rugs/chairs and a picnic tea for afterwards. Details from 01582 872406.

**St Mary’s Church, Kings Walden.** We are a tiny congregation but do have a good choir! On the **third Sunday of each month** we have a sung BCP Holy Communion with the mass setting sung to Merbeck. All welcome.

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**Open Days & Festivals**

**St Paul’s Church, Bedford MK40 1SQ** Curry Evening with Indian Charity presentations. on **Saturday 4th June** at 7pm. Delicious home-cooked food. £8 per head. Book by 31st May at latest. Also **Thursday 16th June**, 7 for 7.30pm. Question Time Debate on European Referendum, Chaired by Bishop of Bedford - will be opportunity to hear from politicians, experts and people of all faiths or none can ask questions. Details about both events from 01234 340163 or www.stpaulsbedford.org.uk

**All Saints Leighton Buzzard** is hosting a 24hr Wildlife Activity Day on **Sunday 5th June**. To find out more visit www.allsaintsleb.org.uk/media/1149/churchyard-wildlife-day.jpg. Activities include Moth watching, Dawn Chorus bird spotting with breakfast, Messy Mass Pet Service, Creatures and Crafts, Parish Eucharist and lots more. To book email: allsaintswildlife@gmail.com.

**Elstow Abbey** Handlewirds with be performing Richard III on **16th June** at 7pm. Castle Theatre Company with be performing Much Ado About Nothing on **12th July** at 7pm. Details from www.elstow-abbey.org.uk.

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SeeRound Online Events Jun 2016/05