

Concerts & Drama

All Saints Church, Hertford. Soundbites concert at 1.00 pm on Wednesday evenings with Light Lunch served from 12 noon. **7th March:** Courtyard Quartet; **14th March:** Catherine Lee – Cello & Adam Paul Logan (Guitar), Free Admission with retiring collection. More information at www.allsaintshertford.org/concerts.php#soundbites

St. Peter's Church, Berkhamsted. Bridgewater Sinfonia concert on **Saturday March 10th** at 7.30pm. Programme includes works by Aaron Copland, Edward Grieg and Ralph Vaughan Williams. Tickets from www.bridgewater-sinfonia.org.uk or 01424 873205

St. Andrew's Church, Bedford Concert by the British mezzo-soprano Kitty Whately accompanied by Joseph Middleton, with a varied programme of songs including works by Kurt Weill, Richard Strauss, Ivor Gurney, and Cole Porter, on **Saturday 10th March** at 7.30pm. Tickets from www.standrewsbedford.org/concerts or call 01234 216881.

St. Mary's Church, Old Welwyn. The Orpheus Choir of North Herts will be holding a concert on **Saturday March 10th** at 7.30pm. The programme will include Faure's Requiem and Cantique de Jean Racine, Cesar Franck's Panis Angelicus and other choral items. Entry £10, tickets from church office or john.swift41@gmail.com 07733 008867.

Christ Church & St. John's, Radlett are organising an event featuring Pam Rhodes in a version of Songs of Praise on **Thursday 15th March**, also supported by the Phoenix Concert Band and an A Cappella choir. Tickets £5, £3 under 16s. From Christ Church Office: 01923 859963 or Brian Davis: 01923 856611

Biddenham Village Hall, Nodders & Music on **Saturday 17th March** at 7.30pm. Light hearted music and songs from swing, film, folk and show tunes plus original songs and poetry. Admission £10 including drinks and light SeeRound Online Events March 2018

refreshments, in aid of BOLD - Beds Opportunities for Learning Disabilities. For tickets call 01234 353662/07767 824787 or 07989 837819.

St. Mary's Church, Luton LU1 3JE. on **Saturday 17th March** at 7.30pm. Luton Choral Society presents Bach's St Matthew Passion with Welwyn Garden City Chorus, Thurrock Choral Society and Luton Youth Cantores, accompanied by Baroque orchestra, 'The Musical Compass', conducted by Crispin Lewis. Tickets £12, £10 (concessions), £5 (under 5) available online at www.lutonchoralsociety.org.uk or on the door.

St Albans Cathedral, AL1 1BY A special 'Celebrate the Commonwealth Service' will be held on **Sunday 18th March** at 11.15am. This should be an uplifting celebration you are encouraged to wear national dress if you have one. Also Liturgical Ensemble of Period Chamber Music performance - **Saturday 24th March.** All events, tickets and times can be found in detail on www.stalbanscathedral.org/whatson/

St Augustine Church, Churchfields, Broxbourne, EN10 7AU. East Herts Church Choirs Association is leading a service of Passion Readings and music including John Rutter's Requiem on **Good Friday 30th March.** Directed by Derek Harrison, with Organ, Harp, Cello, Oboe, Flute and Timpani. All Welcome. Retiring Collection.

All Saints, Hertford. There will be a performance by Adrian Plass including poetry, readings and dramatisations on **Thursday 19th April**, 7.15pm. Tickets will be available from 01992 587544 or from www.searchlighttheatre.org (small booking fee) Cost is £8 in advance or £10 on the door. See poster in bundle notices.

Holy Trinity, Leverstock Green RSCM Regional Choral Evensong on **Sunday 22nd April** - rehearsal at 2.30pm, service at 5.30pm. Repertoire from book 'King of Glory, King of Peace' and fee £6 includes a copy to take away. Visit www.rscm-stalbans.co.uk for booking forms or call Rosemary Knight on 01727 766871.

Holy Child & St. Joseph Church, Midland Road, Bedford. RSCM Instrumental Workshop on **Wednesday 2nd May** 7.30pm-9.30pm run by Miles Quick. He will be looking at styles and techniques to help unite congregations and musicians in worship; instrumentalists and singers equally welcome. Fee £6 booking forms at www.rscm-stalbans.co.uk or from Revd James Reveley vicar@standrewsbedford.org 01234 354234.

St. Mary's Ashwell Music Festival Highlights include: **Friday 11th May** 6pm - Widdershins Puppet Theatre - a FREE event; **Saturday 12th May** 8pm - Motown Tribute Act - Mission Blue; **Thursday 17th May** 7pm - Young Musicians' Concert; **Friday 18th May** 8pm - Darius Brubeck Quartet; **Saturday 19th May** 8pm - An Evening with Ben Goldscheider, Horn & Piano recital; **Sunday 20th May** 6pm - Festival Evensong. Visit www.ashwellmusicfestival.org for details.

Talks & Courses

St. Peter's Church, St. Albans. A community workshop led by Ruth Deamley CEO STOP THE TRAFFIK on 'How to spot the signs of human trafficking in your community' **Sunday March 25th** 3pm - 4.30pm. FREE OF CHARGE. Refreshments provided. Please register your interest by emailing mail@stpeterschurch.uk.com or Tel 01727 855485.

St. Paul's Church, St Albans Jo Moody will be returning to St Paul's, along with some of her team, to lead a two-day conference entitled 'Faith Empowered' on **Friday 27th and Saturday 28th April** 9.30am-4pm. She will also speak at a special healing service **Friday April 27th** evening at 7.45pm. Cost: Free but there will be a place to donate towards the costs of Jo's travel from America and to bless her ministry. For more information and to book your place, visit www.stpauls-stalbans.org/fo-moody/

Marking 100 years since the Armistice

This month we describe some of the projects for marking the moment of Remembrance 2018. Next month, Bishop Alan talks about lasting legacies to the centenary of the Armistice



Church Bells - Ringing Out for Peace

The Central Council of Church Bell Ringers is working with a campaign to get church bells ringing at 7:05 pm on Remembrance Sunday. They are appealing for participants. Pageantmaster Bruno Peek LVOOBE OPR is encouraging bell ringers to take part. "We want this to be the most widespread ringing of church bells since the first world war," he said. "It would be a fitting and moving tribute to the 1400 or so bell ringers that we understand lost their lives during World War One."

Calling it a once in a lifetime opportunity, he continues "I have no doubt that dedicated campanologists in Britain and around the world will want to join in this once-in-a-lifetime tribute to everyone who served on the battlefields, the high seas and the home front."

Ring Out for Peace is part of Battle's Over, a unique day-long commemoration of the end of the first world war taking place throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, and at scores of locations overseas.

It begins at 6am on November 11th 2018 with lone pipers outside every cathedral in the country, playing Battle's O'er, a traditional tune played after a battle. At the same time, pipers everywhere will be playing the same tune in their local communities around the world.

At 6.55pm buglers will sound the Last Post at more than 1,000 locations, where at 7pm WW1 Beacons of Light will be lit, signifying the light of peace that emerged from the darkness of war.

Then at 7.05pm church and cathedral bells will be Ringing Out for Peace! See: www.brunopeek.co.uk/Battles-Over-Guide.pdf?t=1520377273

Poppy Field The Poppy Field art installation will in the Nave of St Albans Cathedral over two nights in October 2018. The climax of both evenings is the lighting of candles at the West End of the Cathedral as the Last Post is played.

'There But Not There'

The team behind the poppies at the Tower of London which marked the centenary of the start of World War I is planning to mark the end in a similarly dramatic, but distinctively local way: parishes all over the country will be able to participate. The project, commended by the Archbishop of Canterbury, is described in a two-minute film: 'No Longer a Name on a Wall,' at www.therebutnotthere.org.uk/gallery/

Following the installation of 51 transparent seated military figures in the Peshurst Church over Remembrance 2016, which resonated widely with the public, 'There But Not There' aims to place a representative perspex figure for as many as possible of the names on local war memorials, around the country, into their place of worship, their school, their workplace or wherever their absence was keenly felt. These transparent silhouettes will be back within their communities for Remembrance 2018.

'There But Not There' aims to be the defining centenary commemoration of the end of the 1914-1918 war. A new charity, Remembered, is behind it. Its aims are Commemorate, Educate and Heal.

Parishes may be able to access grant funding for the installation and merchandise sales will raise money for six service charities. See: www.therebutnotthere.org.uk

Bishop's Letter



Rt Revd Michael Beasley
Bishop of Hertford

God and the Big Bang

"for anyone to say 'science has proved there is no God' is very poor science indeed."

Science and Religion are in conflict with each other' is an oft trotted-out phrase. As someone who has spent much of his life working as a scientist I find it frustrating to say the least. I love science. It's the most astonishing method of understanding how the natural world around us works. I wouldn't for a moment want to be without all that science has given us. I'm a total fan of anaesthesia, mobile phones, the understanding of how stars work and much more.

But as a scientist, I learned early on that overstating what can be deduced from evidence is one of the discipline's cardinal sins. So for anyone to say 'Science has proved there is no God' is very poor science indeed. I've yet to see a peer-reviewed paper in the journal Nature that proves that point.

Faith, in contrast, is not so concerned with the 'how'. It's far more interested in the 'why'. Why should there be existence? What is my meaning, purpose and value? What does it mean to live well in this world that we have been given?

This week, these questions were explored by students at Haileybury College who took part in 'God and the Big Bang', a national initiative that enables schools to encounter the thinking of scientists who are also people of Christian faith. Talks and lessons challenged implicit assumptions. Students were invited to wonder whether



science and religion might not be conflicted, but complementary. Our time at Haileybury began with preaching at chapel by Professor David Wilkinson, cosmologist and theologian and Canon Scientist of St Albans Cathedral. (This was the first sermon in his 18 years at Haileybury that chaplain Chris Briggs could recall receiving a spontaneous ovation from students!) David's words were followed by teaching for years 9

A wise person once said that 'All truth is God's truth'. This week at Haileybury we saw that this is so as science and religion were brought not into conflict but into relationship and dialogue. Unlike the big bang, an interaction that proved not to be explosive!

+ Michael Hertford.

bishop@hertford@stalbans.anglican.org

People around the Diocese

Clergy Appointments

Julia Boothby, presently Team Vicar in Bishop's Hatfield Team Ministry is to become Priest-in-Charge of the benefice of Sirathpeffer, Dingwall and Invergordon in the Diocese of Moray, Ross & Caithness.

Lucy Dallas, presently Team Vicar (with special responsibility for St Nicholas, Eilstree) has resigned but has been granted PIO in the diocese.

Jonathan Evans, presently Vicar of St Cuthbert, Rye Park is to retire to Gloucestershire at the end of April.

Canon Lynne Fawns, presently Vicar of St Peter's Church, London Colney is to retire to Yorkshire in May.

Canon Jane Hatton, previously Chaplain at Lister Hospital, has retired.

Canon Pauline Higham, presently Rector of the benefice of Little Berkhamsted and Bayford, Essendon and Ponsbourne is to become Associate Priest (house for duty) in the benefice of Combs and Great Finborough in the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

Jonathan Juckes, presently President of Oak Hill Theological College and Public Preacher on the Diocese of London, has been granted a Public Preacher's Licence in St Albans Diocese.

Canon Richard Morgan, presently Rector in the benefice of Therfield with Kelshall is to retire in August.

Janet Wilson, presently Team Vicar (with special responsibility for St Clement's, Turford) in Cheshunt Team Ministry, is to retire in September.

Canons **Lindsay Dew**, **Jane Hatton** and **David Lawson** have all been given Canon Emeritus status this year.

Obituary

It is with sadness that we announce the death of **Margaret (Maggie) Young**, Reader at Christ Church St Albans.



INSPIRING MUSIC IN WORSHIP

Following a period of consultation with many different churches across the UK, (rural and urban), we are delighted to announce the imminent launch of Inspiring Music in Worship.

Inspiring Music in Worship encourages parishes to make the best use of music to enhance worship, even when there are very little resources available.

"What a gift! This is outstanding material and could be the most important and effective resource published by the RSCM in recent years. If every RSCM affiliated church ran this course we could see churches, clergy and musicians transformed in their understanding and valuing of music in worship".
Alan Mitchell, *HortSCM*,
St Augustine, Bromley

Price £5.95

ISBN: 9780854022717

<https://www.rscmshop.com/inspiring-music-in-worship.html>

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Grounded in real-life case studies, each session provides an opportunity to discover new riches whilst acknowledging the tensions of traditional and contemporary forms of worship. Working in partnership with Praxis, the book has been created to bring hope to congregations in the face of challenge and unavoidable change.

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Host a Commonwealth

Big Lunch

12th March - 22nd April



During this time, the UK will host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, a summit focused on creating a better future for people across the Commonwealth with leaders from all 53 nations expected to take part. Churches and community groups are invited to bring people together to celebrate community and build connections across the Commonwealth.

The Archbishop of Canterbury is holding a Big Lunch at Lambeth Palace and is inviting people across the church to do the same in their churches and communities. Information and registration: www.edenprojectcommunities.com/commonwealth-big-lunches
There are also resources produced by the Commonwealth Secretariat for children, appropriate to school or children's church groups: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/686178/DfE_Commonwealth_2018_-_Full_Activities_Pack.pdf

Safeguarding Audit for the Diocese

An independent audit of safeguarding arrangements in the Diocese of St Albans strikes a positive note about our safeguarding, it has affirmed the commitment shown to safeguarding by the Bishop and his senior staff in the diocese.

The independent review was carried out by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) which has been commissioned to audit the safeguarding arrangements in every Church of England diocese. These audits seek to understand how safeguarding is working and support continuing improvement. To that end, the audits comment both on what is working well and set out considerations for dioceses to take into account as they develop their safeguarding.

The Diocese is committed to following up the report with action to implement its recommendations.

You can read the full audit here: <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/St-Albans-report-final.pdf>

As the Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse opens the first of its hearings on the Church of England, looking into practice in the Diocese of Chichester, there are some frequently asked questions for parishes available here: <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Parish-QA-1.pdf>

A helpful overview of safeguarding in the Church of England which is of general interest can be read here: <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/Church-of-England-Safeguarding-Review.pdf>

Lent: time to act on Modern Slavery?



The extent of modern slavery across the world is staggering. It is expected to involve over 40 million people, at least 13,000 in the UK. It's difficult to count accurately, so that is likely to be a figure which rises, possibly by several times.

During Lent, these figures might certainly be cause for reflection and prayer, but, thanks to the Clewer Initiative, there are also positive steps we can take to bring the end of modern day slavery closer.

Weekly Challenge

The Clewer Initiative is seeking to harness the strength of the local church - people on the ground in every community - to identify where there might be instances of modern slavery taking place under our noses.

There's still time to sign up to the week-by-week challenge which highlights industries providing goods and services which are affected by modern slavery. There is material for reflection as well as suggested actions we can take. More, and how to sign up, here: <https://www.thedewerinitiative.org/ent>.

Local Training Workshop - 25th March

Part of the Clewer Initiative's approach is to raise awareness in the local church about modern slavery, how to recognise it's signs, when to alert the authorities and what other support the church can offer.

The Diocese of St Albans' Modern Slavery Action Coordinator, the Revd Kelvin Woolmer has arranged a number of workshops on recognising Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery in the Diocese. A workshop will take place at St Peter's Church, St Albans on Sunday 25th March 2018, 3:00-4:30 pm. It will be led by Ruth Dearnley, CEO of 'Stop the Traffik'

Ruth says: "You can't stop what you can't see. Have you wondered what human trafficking looks like? All are welcome to this training workshop for anyone who believes that communities are the power to be the change. Come and learn what human trafficking is, how it affects us and what we can do about it.

There are many great anti-slavery/human trafficking initiatives happening across the diocese. We are providing a place to learn more so as to engage and collaborate with others and imagine new ways of shining a light on this crime in our communities."

The Revd Kevin Woolmer features in this month's Clewer Initiative newsletter. He says:

"What we're talking about is the dignity of individuals and the church is about the freedom of people to live and worship as they please. We respect and love our neighbour as ourselves and these people are our neighbours. The role of the church is as a major caring organisation - we say that we care about people, these are people we should care about."



The Revd Kevin Woolmer

Plugging the Easter knowledge gap with Real Easter Eggs



Surveys carried out in recent years consistently show that nearly half the population does not associate Jesus with Easter, placing him fourth in relevance behind Easter eggs, hot cross buns and the Bank Holiday. More worrying is news that Jesus is only 6 points ahead of the Easter Bunny in relevance. Across England, Scotland and Wales people younger than 24 are the least likely to connect Jesus with Easter. They are also the group which is less likely to believe in the resurrection. However, nearly 70% of those aged fifty and over are clear that Jesus is connected to Easter.

Churches in the UK are planning to distribute more than a quarter of a million Easter stories inside 'Real Easter Eggs' this year as part of a national campaign to plug a gap in knowledge about the religious festival.

David Marshall, from The Meaningful Chocolate Company, said; "it was quite a surprise to discover that nearly 60% of under 24 year olds do not connect Jesus with Easter. There's an opportunity for those over 50 to buy a Real Easter Egg and pass on knowledge of the festival to

younger parents and grandchildren. We hope to distribute 250,000 stories with our eggs and reach more than a million people."

Out of the 80 million chocolate Easter eggs sold each year in the UK, The Real Easter Egg is the first and only Fairtrade chocolate Easter egg with a copy of the Easter story in the box. Launched in 2010, more than a million Real Easter Eggs have been sold with 750,000 of these sent through the post directly to churches and schools. The success of The Real Easter Egg has meant that the production of Fairtrade chocolate has moved to the UK. Over £250,000 has been raised from sales for charitable causes.

All together that says that the Real Easter Egg has the potential to make a difference to the faith of children and young people as well as to charitable causes.

The Real Easter Egg is available from www.realesteregg.co.uk in larger branches of Tesco, ASDA, Waitrose, Morrisons and independent retailers.

“Working with sexually exploited women has increased my faith.”



Azalea was set up in 2007 by several Luton churches seeking to help women in prostitution. After much prayer, a team was trained, a Drop-in opened and street Outreach launched. Azalea has since connected with more than 200 women.

The charity draws many supporters from Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. One of those is Marion Gooding from St Mary's Church, Luton. She shares:

"For years I'd felt a calling to work with sexually exploited women, and I used to see them at the end of our road. As soon as I gave up paid work, I knew the time had come to do Azalea's training course.

It taught me a lot about prayer and how central Jesus was to the work. I also learned about the abuse the women had suffered, some lifelong. Prostitution wasn't something someone decided to do at 18 - it followed years of abuse and control. That really struck home.

What amazes me about Drop-in is that the women are just themselves. They don't put on airs and graces, and are usually very open. That's such a privilege. I'm also blown away that so many women want prayer. That has taught me so much. We've repeatedly seen God answer prayers for the women - it's definitely increased my faith."

Vicki Miller from St Hugh's Lewsey was 18 when she joined Azalea's team:

"I had plans to become a holiday rep, and joined Azalea as a volunteer. I loved Outreach and Drop-in, and felt I wanted to do it all the time, not just one evening a week. So in 2015, I became a full-time support worker.

It's a tough job, dealing with homelessness, domestic violence, and very low self-esteem. One example is a woman whose partner is physically and psychologically abusive. I helped her to press charges and receive justice. I try to get her to grasp her worth and that this abuse isn't normal, by speaking positive words over her.

Through Azalea, I've learned a lot about my identity and who God has created me to be. I've learned about the humility of God, and the importance of being the farmer sowing seeds not harvesting the fruit. Azalea isn't easy, the challenges bring great rewards. God didn't ask us to take the easy option."

Azalea is looking for new frontline volunteers. The next 2-day training course takes place on March 3 and April 21. Find out what volunteering and training entails at www.azalea.org.uk/training.