

Concerts & Drama

All Saints Hertford. SoundBites – a weekly concert series on Wednesdays. Food from 12:00 Free Concert at 13:00.
Nov 8th - Isabel Crouch - Clarinet. **Nov 15th** - Diana Brekalo - Piano Brahms and his contemporaries. **Nov 22nd** - Concentus VII Baroque Ensemble (Recorders, Dulciana, Harpsichord) - Frescobaldi and his contemporaries.
Nov 29th Simon Smith – Violin, Mark Fielding - Piano, Beethoven Violin Sonata Cycle V. More information <http://www.allssaintshertford.org/concerts.php>
St John's Church, Harpenden Coffee Concerts on Saturday mornings at 10.30am. **4th November** - Sirius Chau (flute) and Rosanna Rolton (harp). **9th December** Roger Carter (organ). Admission free, retiring collection. www.sjohnsharpenden.org.uk

St Albans Cathedral. Brahms German Requiem and Strauss Four last songs performed by St Albans Bach Choir and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra on **Saturday 18th November**, 7.30pm. For more information visit www.stalbanscathedral.org/whats-on/music.

OLU Concert by The London Welsh Rugby Club Choir with guest artist Rhiannon George. **Saturday 18th November**, 7pm. Tickets £12 and can be bought through the parish office (01923 661862). **Also** Christmas Market with lovely craft & gift stalls, fun activities and more **Saturday, 2nd December**, 10.30am to 2.30pm.

St Peter's Church, Berkhamstead. Bridgewater Sinfonia Concert on **Saturday 25th November** at 7.30pm.. Programme includes works by Alexander Borodin, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky and Sergei Rachmaninov. Tickets £16, £15 in advance and U18s free. Tel: 01442 873205 or visit www.bridgewater-sinfonia.org.uk

St Mary's Church Redbourn. Concert by The Beaman Consort performing music by Schubert, Mozart, Weber and more. **Saturday 25th November** at 7.45pm. Entrance free, retiring collection in aid of Open Doors UK.

Open Days & Festivals

St James the Great Thorley. Autumn Craft Fair, on **Saturday 4th November** 11-3.30pm at St Barnabas Centre, Church Lane, Thorley CM23 4BE. A large selection of stalls and locally made gift items and much more. Refreshments throughout, Soup, bread and cheese lunches from 12 noon.

St Paul's Church, St Paul's Sq. Bedford, MK40 1SQ. **Saturday 18th November.** Christmas Fair in aid of charities 10-4pm. **Also.** Christmas Tree Festival **Wednesday 6th - Sunday 10th December**, open daily 10-4pm and 12-4pm Sunday. There will be a festival concert by Celophany cello octet on **Saturday 9th at 7pm**, tickets from 01234 340163 / 783181. To book a stall at the fair or Christmas tree to decorate please contact 01234 340163 www.stpaulschurchbedford.org.uk/

All Saints Church, Hertford, SG13 8AE. Christmas Bazaar on **Saturday 25 November** 10am – 2pm. Stalls include: Homemade Cakes, Cards, Crafts, Vintage Gifts, Books, Willow Baskets, Scarves, Chocolate Tombola, Aschianna Charity Stall, Christmas and Memorial Wreaths to Order. Raffle with Great Prizes. Refreshments and Delicious Lunches. Musical Performances and Children's Craft Activities. Free Entry. Details: www.allssaintshertford.org.

St. Mary's Church, Carlton. Amazing Christmas Bazaar on **Saturday 25th November** 10am-1pm in Carlton Village Hall. Grand draw at 12.30pm. Entry £1 for adults, children free. Come and visit Father Christmas!

St. Mary's Church North Mymsms Christmas Tree Festival on **Friday 1st - Sunday 3rd December**. The theme is 'Journeys'. The Festival will open on **Friday 1st December** with mulled wine, light refreshments, a chance to view the trees and a concert by the Buck Brass Trio – tickets £10. Entry on **Saturday and Sunday** is £2 (free U16). There will be refreshments, children's workshops, cake, book and craft stalls. For more information visit www.stmarysnorthmymsms.org.uk

Reader Ministry Training gets vote of confidence



Reader Ministry Training in St Albans Diocese has been given a positive vote of confidence in the recent Periodic External Review to which all ministerial teaching courses in the Church of England are subject. The news comes as Lauryn Awbrey, Reader Ministry Officer, announces her departure after 10 years in post. The report is a massive vote of confidence in all she has done.

The external review team assesses six aspects of Reader Training and responds with commendations, recommendations and findings of confidence, confidence with qualifications or no confidence.

Overall, St Albans Diocese's Reader Ministry Training is given a 'confidence' rating and only two areas out of the six are marked with any qualifications, although recommendations are made across the board for how the course could be even better.

The review found a strong sense of community among participants, teachers and graduates. It commended the quality of teaching and associated materials, and recognised the strength of diocesan support for the training programme and for Reader Ministry, the strength of pastoral support for students and the quality of teaching accommodation. The course is also commended as providing for a range of different skills and aptitudes.

Lauryn has overseen the transformation of the Reader Training programme over the last ten years from one

described in the Review as 'having no clear timetable or deadline for completion and which didn't fare very positively in earlier reviews,' to the present success, based on a partnership with the Eastern Region Ministry Course (which also trains ordinands).

Lauryn says: "One of the stated aims of the course is that each Reader will, we hope, be able to talk about their faith and about Jesus in ways that attract people to want to know more; each Reader will, we hope, live out their faith in ways that show the face of God to those whom they meet. I am particularly pleased that the report reflects this." It says: "Readers come from a diversity of occupations and backgrounds to serve God in a wide variety of situations and as such they are a bridge between the day-to-day life of the world and the church."

The report also comments: "The diocesan publication 'So what do Readers really do?' provides four profiles of recently-licensed Readers and provides evidence of the ways in which mission and evangelism permeate their Reader Ministry. The enthusiasm and commitment of these four Readers shines through in the very different contexts in which they operate. Our interviews with students, past and present, indicated similar commitment to sharing the good news of the gospel and to teaching and learning the faith." To read the report: www.churchofengland.org/media/4038352/1st-albans-final-report-13-sept-2017.docx

Advanced Notice for Springs Dance Company 'Bread of Life' performance hosting opportunities in Lent/Easter 2018. See poster in Ebundle.

The harvest is plentiful

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus appoints seventy of his disciples and 'sends them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he intends to go' (Luke 9:1). As they leave, Jesus says 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.' (Luke 9:2).

I wonder how you react to reading Jesus' words? As I visit churches, I often learn that just a few people seem to be doing most of the work – the labourers indeed are few. And for many of us, communicating the Gospel to the culture around is a big challenge. It's not immediately apparent that there's a plentiful harvest out there, just waiting to be gathered in.

But there are encouragements that we can find ways to live out Jesus' words in our generation. I've seen two of these in the last month – our work with Fresh Expressions and our work with the course 'Leading Your Church into Growth'.

What is a Fresh Expression? The Church of England says, 'A Fresh Expression of church serves those outside the church, listens to people and enters their culture, makes discipleship a priority and forms church.' Here in our Diocese, many churches (up to 180 at the last count) are seeking to put these words into action through activities such as Messy Church, Café Congregations and Church for particular age groups such as the 20s-30s.

We're supporting this work through the project 'Reaching New People in New Ways' (for which we were awarded Church Commissioners' Strategic Development Funding earlier this year). What strikes me when I encounter Fresh Expressions is that when we offer people ways to encounter God very different to our usual offering, a whole range of folk seem to turn up who we've never met before.

There is a spiritual hunger around us; the harvest indeed is plentiful. But Fresh Expressions suggests that we may need to find different ways to gather it in. In this we've been encouraged this last month by the start of 'Mission Shaped Ministry' – a one-year, part-time course which takes people on a learning journey as part of a supportive community, training them for ministry in Fresh Expressions of church. Here in St Albans, around 40 people, lay and ordained, have stepped up to take part in this training; labourers for the harvest.

This might all sound as if we can only reach out to new



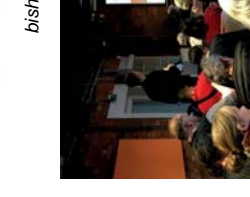
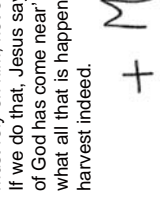
Rt Revd Michael Beasley
Bishop of Hertford

people by offering experiences of church that are very different to the ways we've done things in the past. By no means! The other encouragement of the last month was to see around 90 people, made up of lay and ordained members of 26 benefices, take part in the four-day residential course 'Leading Your Church into Growth'. The course helped those who took part to enable and plan for the growth of our parish churches and to find ways to turn these plans into actions that help churches grow. We were inspired and learnt a lot. In the coming months we look forward to seeing how what we learned is being translated into practice around our diocese. Again our hope is to see more harvest brought in by more people. How will any of this work out in practice? We don't ultimately know. But what is clear on reading Jesus' words in Luke 9 is that seeing this turned into action demands faith and trust in Jesus' provision. Jesus sends his disciples out into the unknown and uncomfortable, and tells them that they must rely on him, not on their own strengths or resources.

If we do that, Jesus says, 'You will know that the kingdom of God has come near' (Luke 9:11). And that, of course, is what all that is happening needs to be about – a plentiful harvest indeed.

+ Michael Hertford.

bishop@hertford@stalbands.org



Clergy Appointments

Emily Davis, previously Assistant Curate in Bishop's Stortford benefice is now Associate Priest in the benefice of Easthamstead in Oxford Diocese.

Canon Lindsay Dew, presently Rector, in the benefice of Dunton with Wrestlingworth and Eyeworth, Honorary Canon and Rural Dean of Biggleswade, is due to retire in February 2018.

Atalie Gaines, presently Assistant Curate at St Andrew's Church, Bedford will become Vicar at King Charles the Martyr, Potters Bar.

Philip Green, presently Assistant Curate in Training (SSM) at St Peter's Church, London Colney, has had a title change to Associate Minister (SSM) of the same.

Canon David Lawson, presently Team Rector (with special responsibility for Kings Langley) within the Langlei Team Ministry, is to retire in January 2018.

Lynn Money, presently Team Vicar in Dunstable Team Ministry (St Fremunds) is to become Rector of Ashfords Benefice in the Diocese of Hereford.

Rickey Simpson-Gray, presently Assistant Curate in Training (SSM) in Hemel Hempstead Team Ministry, has had a title change to Associate Minister (SSM) of the same.

Joshua (Josh) Young, presently Assistant Curate in the benefice of Welwyn Garden City, is moving to Kent.

Diocesan Appointments

The Revd Joy Cousins has been appointed as Vocations Advisor for Bedford Archdeaconry. She takes over from the Revd Jennie Cappleman with immediate effect.

Movements in Diocesan Office

Michele Manders retired as Estates Secretary in July after 19 years of service in the diocese.



Nigel Bengier who was Glebe & Trusts Officer retired in early October after 11 years service in the diocese.



Iain Blythe who was Estates Officer was appointed Secretary in Estates in July.



Elizabeth Pazzi-Axworthy was appointed as Estates and Trusts Officer and took up her post in September.



Hannah Puddefoot was appointed as Assistant Schools Officer in September.



Martyn Hedley was appointed as part-time Assistant Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser in October.



Luke Larner Commissioned

Luke Larner (pictured left with Canon Tim Lomax) was recently commissioned at a service in St Mary's Luton as the diocese's first Lay Pioneer Minister. Luke has completed a period of study with the CMS Lay Pioneer training course. Luke is known as the Ragamuffin Chaplain and is also President of God's Squad Christian Motorcycle Club, UK South Chapter. Canon Tim Lomax, Director of Mission, said: "One down 799 to go. Luke is the first of a new breed of leader for reaching new people in new ways. We are thrilled to see Luke's leadership taking shape and his ability to reach communities with which conventional church has little contact and finds it hard to reach."



All on the Church's bees-ness



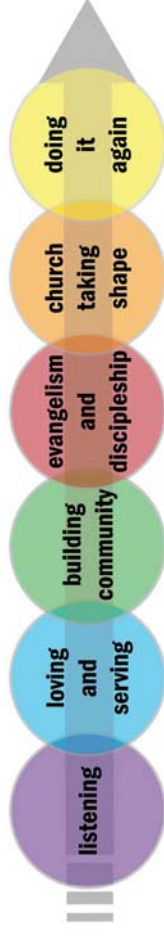
The connection between bees and the church is well known. There are many examples of stained glass depicting beehives, perhaps the best known being St Ambrose, and many analogies between Christian ministry and the lives of bees of which St John Chrysostom said: "The bee is more honoured than other animals, not because it labours, but because it labours for others."

So it should not come as any surprise that many clergy in the Diocese of St Albans keep bees and make honey.

At All Saints Church in Leighton Buzzard, they have also used that other product of beehives: beeswax, to make a wax crib set. This crib set has won first prize in Bedfordshire Beekeeper's Association's Annual Honey Show's beeswax model section. The crib, which was made last year, is now in All Saints. Margaret Wallace and others at the church made the models and entered them to put something gospel-related into the competition.

In the same vein, Bishop Richard recently blessed the bees at All Saints, where there are several hives belonging to the Bee Group, run by church members and including people from the wider community.

Budgeting to reach new people in new ways



Parishes, schools and chaplaincies throughout our diocese are Living God's Love so that God's kingdom may grow in our communities. The parts of that vision, are going deeper into God, transforming communities and making new disciples, and much wonderful and transforming activity, undergirded by prayer, is going on in the places where we worship and elsewhere.

In spite of that, the recently reported further decline in church attendance sharpens the focus on the need to make new disciples of Jesus Christ across all of our communities. That will tip the balance from decline outweighing the growth found in some places and make our churches grow.

So the budget for 2018, recently passed by Synod and presented in the Archdeacons, has been put together to place resources where they will help make new disciples to build our congregations.

A major focus of our efforts will be a new programme called "Reaching New People in New Ways" which is fully integrated with Living God's Love and aims to make 8000 new disciples of Christ over the next 10 years. We will do this in two ways:

- By creating 300 maturing fresh expressions of church and equipping 1200 lay leaders
- By promoting growth across our deaneries, benefices, parishes and churches.

We will be appointing three Fresh Expressions Development Officers (one for each archdeaconry) who

will play a key role in inspiring and enabling church growth and the development of maturing fresh expressions of church. The bonus for us is that this new Fresh Expressions initiative will be largely funded by a grant from the Church Commissioners and spread over the next five years. We will need to make some funds available in years 4 and 5 (2021 and 2022) but not before then.

In addition to that, we are filling two posts that were vacated earlier this year with Church Growth Officers. They will be responsible for being alongside parishes who need help and support in putting their MAPs into practice.

Our budget will also fund an additional deacon to be ordained thus helping to ensure that our parochial ministry headcount can be maintained even after the anticipated retirement over the next ten years of a large number of our clergy.

After taking account of the clergy stipend increase of 2% and other ongoing expenditure and after working hard to identify some savings, the increase in the budget and in the parish share is 2.45%, below the current rate of inflation and equating to about £13 per church member per year.

We pray that this budget will enable our diocese to carry on the work of Living God's love and with the additional funds available we will be able to grasp the opportunity to make new disciples for Christ.

David Nye
Chair, Diocesan Board of Finance



There are other practical ways, apart from attending to finances, in which the diocese is preparing to reach new people in new ways. One is the **Mission Shaped Ministry Course** (left), which began recently, it has a full complement of participants for its first season. Another way was through the recent **Fresh Expressions Planning Day** (right) at which those who are already running or planning Fresh Expressions explored the obstacles, practical and spiritual, to making them travel towards maturity.

More than one Sleepout this year!

There is more than one Sleepout taking place in 2017, but not at St Albans Abbey. With facilities for such an event unavailable at St Albans Abbey for the next couple of winters, many of St Albans Sleepout's partner charities are doing their own thing. Also, The Church Urban Fund is holding it's Advent Sleepout to support churches opening as winter night shelters. See the foot of the page for more.

In the St Albans area, a coalition of local charities - Centre 33, Emmaus, Herts Young Homeless, Open Door are holding St Albans Sleepout on **1st December**. See www.stalbanssleepout.org.uk

In **Hemel Hempstead**, DENS, Daconum Emergency Night Shelter, is also holding a Sleepout on **1st December** details here:

www.dens.org.uk/files/pdfs/Sleep%20out%20poster.pdf

In **Watford**, New Hope is holding The Big Imagine Sleepout on **18th November** at Fullarians Rugby Club. It's not too late to sign up or sponsor those who are, details here: <https://www.imaginesleepout.com>

If you need any encouragement to take part, Matthew Heasman, CEO at New Hope, says: 'Waking up cold after a night of little sleep made me more determined than ever to play a part in ending rough sleeping. No human being should have to do this.'

2016's Sleepout

Brian Peyton, Abbey Sleep out Coordinator, reports last year's Sleep out was another record breaker. Brian says "I am delighted that a new record of over £62,000 was raised last December by 335 people taking part in our sponsored event in support of eleven homeless charities in the St Albans Diocese. This brings the total raised since the event began in 1993 to over £680,000".

CUF'S Advent Sleepout Challenge

Sleep out with your friends and fellow church goers and receive sponsorship, either through our online fundraising pages or through offline sponsorship forms. That money then goes to the work of Church Urban Fund's Together programme and its work to support people who are homeless in England. Get together with friends or a church youth group and set



Brian feels this is the time for him to stand down having led a total of eighteen events since 1998 and would be glad to hear from anyone who might like to take on the leadership of future such events. Brian may be contacted on 01582 761723.

Homelessness on the rise

The number of rough sleepers in the UK in 2016 was over 4000, according to Government figures.

This is only one index of homelessness and research by Crisis describes several categories of homelessness: living or staying in hostels, rough sleeping, sofa surfing, unsuitable temporary accommodation and other forms of homelessness. In the next 14 years, analysis done for Crisis, the homelessness charity, suggests that almost all of these indexes will rise significantly. The number of homeless people in Britain will go up from 236,000 in 2016 to 575,000. The number of people sleeping rough will more than quadruple from 9,100 in 2016 to 40,100 over the same period, it is forecast.

The biggest rise will be for those placed by a council in unsuitable accommodation, such as bed and breakfasts, with the total predicted rise from 19,300 to 117,500.

up a sleepout together. Take a look at CUF's online checklist and register your event at: <https://www.sleepoutchallenge.org.uk/register/>

They've also got stacks of great ideas for how you can make your Sleepout Challenge a lot of fun, from games to fancy dress.

Take a look at their resources page to find out more: www.sleepoutchallenge.org.uk/resources/ or get in touch through hello@cuf.org.uk

80th Birthday connects with friends old and new



St Lukes' celebrates with a barbecue and The Revd Kylie Hodgkins shows off her freshly made balloon corsage

St Luke's Church Bricket Wood has just turned 80 and celebrated over three days with a concert, a fun day attended by many in the local community and a service presided by some very important guests.

St Luke's is one of the younger churches in the St. Albans area, in the midst of a sea of antiquity. Bricket Wood has a long and varied history stretching back to the Bronze Age and before and more lately being part of one of the Abbot of St Albans' manors. Although there was a Roman presence, it was small and related to the use of clay for pottery and population settlement was largely absent until the 20th century.

St Luke's was built to serve this growing village community, opening its doors in October 1937 as a church/village hall. At that time it was a daughter church of Holy Trinity Frogmore and only became a parish in its own right in 1981. Its first vicar was Nick Bell, who went on to serve at St Mary's, Luton until his retirement, and the current Vicar

who has been in post for just a year is Kylie Hodgkins. St Luke's birthday celebrations began with a concert given by Jonathan Vieira, the accomplished Bass-Baritone who also sang at Celebrate 100, the diocese's 100th birthday in 2014.

The fun day included a performance from the Bricket Wood Community choir which brings community and church together with music, as well as face painting, a barbecue, tea and cake, music and a variety of stalls in the church. The service on Sunday included a time for people to say what their connection with the church was. One man, Bob, explained that although he was no longer living in the area, his connection with St Luke's went back 80 years as he had been baptised there in 1937 and later went into missionary work overseas.

Many members of the church who had also been on overseas missionary work, also present, gave a sense of St Luke's success as a sending church for some years.