

Concerts & Drama

St Luke's Church, Brickley Wood, AL2 3NE - join us as we celebrate the 80th Anniversary of St Luke's. **Friday 13th October** in church: 7.30pm - Jonathan Veira Concert - internationally acclaimed singer, musician, comedian/raconteur www.jonathanveira.com. Tickets Adults: £12 children £8 office@st-lukes.org.uk 01923 676401. **Saturday 14th October** in church complex: 2.00-5.30pm - Community Fun Day! - An afternoon of fun and activities for all ages. **Sunday 15th October** in church: 10.30am - service of celebration and thanksgiving. **All Saints Hertford, SoundBites** - a weekly concert series on Wednesdays. Food from 12.00 Free Concert at 13.00. **Nov 1st** - Justyna Briefjes - Violin, Simon Marlow - Piano. **Nov 8th** - Isabel Crouch - Clarinet. **Nov 15th** - Diana Brekalo - Piano. Brahms and his contemporaries. **Nov 22nd** - Concertus 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 at <http://www.allsaintshertford.org/concerts.php>

St Albans Cathedral: Come & Sing Fauré's Requiem on Saturday 4th November, 2.30pm rehearsal 6.30pm performance. Tickets £12 (tickets for performance £5). Scores and cold refreshments will be provided. Afternoon led by Andrew Lucas. For more information visit www.stalbenscathedrals.org/learning/study-centre/study-days or call 01727 890290

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.stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

St Peter's Church, Berkhamsted, 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

Open Days & Festivals

All Saints Church, Remhold All Saints are celebrating their Patronal weekend with a Flower Festival, to be held on **Friday 27th October** (12-5pm), **Saturday 28th October** (10-5pm) and **Sunday 29th October** (12-4pm). The theme is 'The Saints'. Tea, coffee and home made cakes will be available. Entry free. Further details 01234 870461.

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. To book a stall please contact 01234 340163. www.spaulschurchbedford.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, Aschiana Charity Stall, Christmas and Memorial Wreaths to Order. Raffle with Great Prizes. Refreshments and delicious lunches. Musical performance by Wheatcroft Primary School Choir and Children's craft activities. Free Entry. Details: www.allsaintshertford.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 Mymms** Christmas Tree Festival on **Friday 1st**

Links with Sweden Renewed



L-R Ann Smith, John Wallace, Bp Martin, Bp Alan, Pam Wise & Frederik Olofsson

Introducing the signing of a further covenant with the Swedish Church's Diocese of Linköping at Diocesan Synod, Bishop Alan said: "Whatever your views on the current situation and Brexit, I think there is no doubt that there is a vital need for us to strengthen and develop friendships with our brothers and sisters right across our neighbouring countries and of course within churches in those countries. We've been greatly enriched by our links not least with the Caribbean but also with those closer to home in particular the Lutheran Diocese of Linköping."

Bishop Martin spoke about his pleasure at the co-operation between the two diocese and went on to speak about the strategic renewal of parishes in Linköping based on seven movements or shifts in perspective of what a parish is or can be. Changes of perspective lead to people acting differently.

These shifts were:

1. From discouragement to hope. This shifts focus onto what inspires and brings hope.
2. The next three shifts move the church from being a place

where people, many employed as staff in the Swedish Church, do things for worshippers to a church where all participate and share tasks together.

2. From a user to a bearer
3. From a producer of activity to a community in life
4. From being performers to enablers.

The next shift seeks to rectify the fragmentation of the church into work done with different age groups.

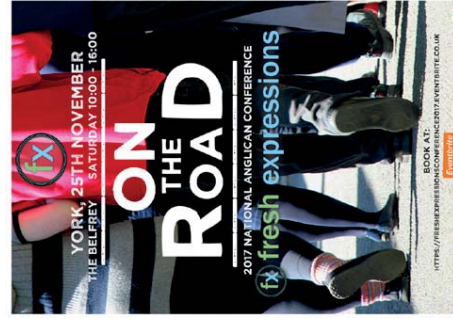
5. A move from mono-generational work to multi-generational work

The next shift addresses the nature of society that the church is trying to reach:

6. Movement from uniformity to diversity - and finally the means of achieving it.
7. Movement from a focus on the order of the church service to a focus on the community of the church service.

The short address given by the Bishop of Linköping, Bishop Martin Modeus, to Synod amply demonstrated the truth of Bishop Alan's comments about the value of learning from another perspective.

More photos: <https://flic.kr/s/ahHsm6mRvDK>



Talks & Courses

What a Difference a Week Makes!

The conference call via Skype was a moving experience of mutual concern with the Anglican Communion. With participants in Australia, the States, Barbados, London and elsewhere who represented organisations such as Anglican Overseas Aid, Episcopal Relief and Development, the Mothers' Union and the Anglican Communion Office, the call focused on the needs of the Diocese of North East Caribbean and Aruba (NECA) post the devastation wreaked by hurricane Irma and hurricane Maria. It was the Anglican world-wide family working together to respond to a sister diocese in need. What I had seen on the news now became even more real as Bishop Errol, the Diocesan Bishop of NECA, described the impact of these level



A scene of devastation - the wreckage of St George's Church, Dominica

five hurricanes on what is one of our linked Caribbean Dioceses.

The island of Barbuda is now uninhabitable and the entire population of 1500 people has been evacuated to Antigua, Anguilla, St Barths and St Maartens have terrible damage, including the loss of vital services, with similar reports from Saba and St Eustatius. Many of the churches have been damaged or destroyed. On Dominica, which suffered worst under hurricane Maria, not only is access to the island compromised through destruction of the port, but there has also been looting on the island. Tourism, that is crucial to the economy of these islands, has been traumatically disrupted. Bishop Errol reports that so far fifteen people are known to have been killed.

The need for assistance and prayer as the island communities rebuild is pressing and significant. The people are resilient, but they need our help. It is encouraging to hear of the £8000 that has already been raised in response to Bishop Alan's Appeal. I hope that there will be many other collections to support our brothers and sisters in the Leeward Islands.

But what a difference a week makes (to adapt Dinah Washington's song)! Seven days before hurricane Irma struck I returned home after nine days with Bishop Errol in NECA. I had been there, with Revd David Kesterton from Luton, to represent our Diocese at the celebrations to mark the 175th anniversary of the Diocese. Preaching to a packed Cathedral I touched on the themes that the Diocese had chosen for their anniversary year – Celebrating our Heritage; Seizing the Moment; Embracing the Future. There was a joyful and powerful sense of the



Richard Atkinson
Bishop of Bedford

Paul Underhill RIP

Daniel Freyhan, presently Assistant Curate in Training in the benefice of St Nicholas and Graveley in Stevenage, has been appointed Vicar of St Mary Magdalene in Prudhoe, Newcastle Diocese.

Neil Kelley, presently Rector in the benefice of Bushey, is to become Rector in the benefice of St Lawrence Chorley, in Blackburn Diocese.

Christopher Kilgour, presently Assistant Curate in the benefice of St Mary the Virgin, Chalk in Rochester Diocese, is to become Vicar in the benefice of Northaw & Cuffley.

Rob O'Neill, presently Priest-in-Charge in the benefice of Caddington and Farley Hill has become Vicar of the same.

Fiona Souter, presently Assistant Curate in Training (SSM) at Holy Trinity Stevenage, has also been appointed Assistant University Chaplain for the University of Hertfordshire.

Sonya Wratten, presently Priest-in-Charge at All Saint's Church, Bedford is to become Healthcare Chaplain in University of Leicester Hospitals Trust, Leicester Diocese.



Diocesan Appointments

The Revd Dave Poultney has been appointed as Assistant Rural Dean of Watford. Dave has actually been acting in this capacity since July 2016, and it has now been formalised.

Canon David Nye has been appointed Canon Emeritus.

St Albans Cathedral has announced the sudden death of the Head Virger, Paul Underhill. He served the Cathedral and Diocese for just under 30 years and died following a stroke on Tuesday 26 September.

The Dean of St Albans, Dr Jeffrey John, said:

"The whole Cathedral is in mourning for Paul. In many ways he was its best-known face, and was often the first point of contact with visitors. Moving tributes are already pouring in from all over the world from visitors and pilgrims who have kept a lasting impression of his welcome and helpfulness. His remarkable memory and care of so many people he had known down the years made him an invaluable asset to the Cathedral's pastoral work. His deep personal faith and his liturgical instinct contributed enormously to the depth and good order of our worship. Paul loved St Albans Cathedral, and embodied the combination of spiritual commitment with human friendliness and fun which we strive to offer. We are very much in his debt, we thank God for him, and we will miss him terribly. May he rest in peace and rise in glory."

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



Real Advent Calendar Competition Announced

To celebrate the launch of the 2017 Real Advent Calendar a special competition has been announced.

Schools, churches and children's groups are invited to design their own Advent Calendar. There are three first prizes of £150 in each category and three runners-up prizes of £50. All winners and runners-up will also receive a box of our Host of Angels Christmas tree decorations.

Philip Haley, from the Meaningful Chocolate Company, said: "It couldn't be easier. We would like children to design the front of an Advent Calendar by taking inspiration from the Gospel accounts of the birth of Jesus.

The Real Advent Calendar is the UK's only Fairtrade Advent calendar which comes with a free book which tells the Christmas story and which raises money for charity.

We are really interested to see what young people would feature on their own Real Advent Calendar to help tell the Christmas story." You can read more about the Real Advent Calendar at www.goo.gl/0nx6Ao

Entry Details

The competition is open to primary schools, secondary schools, Sunday schools /Messy Church or other youth groups such as Guides, Boys' Brigade etc. All entries must be completed on A4 paper. On the back of each entry you need to indicate the name of child, age, title of the school/ church/group and a contact number. The contact number should be that of the school or leader of the group only and not the child.



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way in which God had blessed his people over the years and a confidence as they looked forward. However, 'Never in our wildest dreams' as Bishop Errol has put it, 'did we anticipate that a few days later, several of our islands would be visited by two major hurricanes.' These are testing times. Yet, I know that the faith that has sustained them over the last 175 years, is the faith that will sustain them at this time of trial. It is the promise of God acclaimed by the Prophet Isaiah: 'When you pass through the waters, I will

be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.' (Isaiah 43:2).

+ Richard Bedford
 bishopbedford@stalbans.anglican.org



A few images from Bishop Richard's visit to the NECA celebration at St John's Cathedral, Antigua

If you wish to give emergency aid you can send it directly to the Red Cross appeal which you will find on their website www.redcross.org.uk or directly via this link, <http://bit.ly/2xal1C7>

If you wish to give to the diocese for the rebuilding of churches vicarages and grants to parishioners who have been injured, please send your money to Holywell Lodge, marked 'Hurricane Irma Appeal', cheques made out to 'St Albans DBF'.

Bank transfers may be made to:
 Sort Code: 20 74 09 Account No: 20776041
 Reference: 2210102 Hurricane Appeal
 If you or your parish sends a bank transfer, please send a confirmation email to: finance@stalbans.anglican.org
 The address for Holywell Lodge is:
 Holywell Lodge, 41 Holywell Hill
 St Albans
 AL1 1HE

Christmas 2017:

This year's national Church of England Christmas campaign, is: #GodWithUs



Archbishop Justin says in his introduction to the campaign: "The constant refrain of Christmas, in carols and readings, is that God is with us. In whatever situations you find yourself this Christmas, God is with you – you need only turn to him and ask to know his presence".

There are three key elements to this year's campaign:

1. Video adverts that tell the story of people's journeys to church at Christmas and what Christmas means to them, which will be released throughout December on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.
Please share these via parish websites and social media.
2. A redesign of 'A Church Near You' – our national church finder, getting 13 million hits a year, which will point people to a Christmas service or event taking place in one of the 16,500 Church of England churches. This will launch in November 2017. **More soon.**
3. 'Your Christmas Journey,' a series of short reflections which will be offered throughout December and into early January 2018, introduced by Archbishop Justin. The reflections have been written by soulfood] for people who are new to faith and to help us all grow in our love of God. People can receive the messages as texts, emails, on social media and Church House Publishing have produced a booklet which would be ideal for churches to give to those attending Advent and Christmas services – **More at: www.chpublishing.co.uk/godwithus**
There's a one-stop shop for resources here: www.churchofengland.org/media-centre/christmas-2017-godwithus.aspx

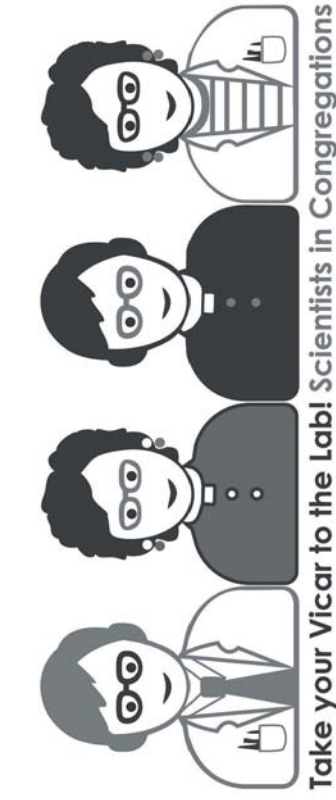
What if the first Christmas had happened somewhere near you?



Never mind the obvious differences, Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty and The Nativity are all told as tales from a land far, far away and a long time ago. But what if the first Christmas happened now, somewhere nearby, where people are struggling to make ends meet, living within a multicultural, multi-ability, multi-generational community? What would the struggle, uncertainty and surprise (none in short supply nowadays) of the narrative look like then? The Revd Austin Janes, from Grovehill, Hemel Hempstead, has taken his experiences of areas of economic challenge and written and illustrated a new book, 'The Kitchen Sink Nativity', exploring in poetic rhyme the Christmas story as it happened on just such a doorstep.

Austin tells the story like this: "Mary and Joe receive a surprising message from an Angel, who is a long way from being a little girl with tinsel in her hair. As the story unfolds, they are evicted from their comfortable home, and instead only find use of the kitchen floor in a B&B. There may be no managers or shepherds in this Nativity story, but there are drunken students and a kitchen sink!
Austin hopes that the pocket size, full colour printed poetry book will be bought by churches as gifts to the children in the schools they serve, or for their Nativity services and appeal to adults and children alike. There is also a format of an order of service with options for acting out the story, or projecting the provided Power Point images. The service comes with suggestions for Bible readings and carols. Copies of the book with accompanying resources are available from the Church of the Resurrection website where costs and ordering methods can be found:
www.grovehillchurch.co.uk

All the proceeds go towards the ministry of the Church in Grovehill and Woodhall Farm, Hemel Hempstead.



Take your Vicar to the Lab! Scientists in Congregations

Although Vicars in Labs currently has no more visits scheduled, it is far from dormant, having recently turned its attention to computing.

It's common to think of computers, although very helpful as not actually very bright: if you put garbage in, you get garbage out. So if computers become as or more intelligent than humans through the development of Artificial Intelligence, (AI) what are the implications for faith and for that matter for humans?

These and similar questions were the subject of a recent conference on 'The Internet, Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Computing', held at High Lee under the Vicars in Labs banner.

The speakers included Tony Hey, until recently Vice-President of Microsoft Research Connections and the Revd Kathryn Pritchard, Project Manager and Research Fellow for 'Equipping Christian Leadership in an Age of Science' at St John's College Durham, parent project of Scientists in Congregations which is behind take your Vicar to the Lab. Also present were priest and eminent scientist the Revd Prof Nicholas Goulding and Director of Ministry, with a background and PhD in computing, Revd Dr Tim Bull, both co-directors of Take your Vicar to the Lab.

The conference concerned itself primarily with social questions and pragmatic outworkings of artificial intelligence, such as the implications for employment. Tony Hey spoke about the overqualification of many graduates for the jobs available - such as responding to requests for more chips - of the fried variety.

The conference also examined ethical issues around the development of self-driving cars. How, for example are manufacturers approaching issues such as how these cars would choose in an accident between heading for a mother with a pram and killing the driver of the car? Who would decide how to programme the car's response and what ethical view would inform that choice?

Would such a car or computer be able to learn or develop ethics for itself? This is a common science-fiction plot of the kind where machines decide to prioritise their survival over that of their human creators, as in the film 'I Robot'.

Whether a machine could make such decisions or be dependent on someone programming in such choices might depend on what would characterise the artificial intelligence given to it.

Scientists are beginning to describe two kinds of AI, weak and strong. Weak AI machines replicate human intelligence but do not show any attributes of consciousness. Strong AI machines would have something approaching consciousness. Tony Hey believed strongly that Strong AI is impossible, a view also informed by his own Christian faith.

Tim Bull described an experiment to the conference which demonstrated this. An AI computer was given all the words in English and Latvian and by itself worked out how to translate between the two languages. Although it could translate very effectively between the two, it couldn't explain how it had learnt and nor could it derive any rules for translation. The suggestion is that it would need to have consciousness to be able to do that.

The conference also examined the implications of the vast amount of data collected and held about people and their activity, often including their movements or whereabouts and the presence of that data in the hands of companies such as Google. What are the ethics of so much being known about individuals?

Reflecting on the conference, Tim Bull concluded: "While AI of the future may be able to simulate many aspects of human intelligence, I don't believe we will ever create a genuinely conscious machine. There is something about our God-given nature – a 'soul' if you like – which makes us unique."