Scientists: take your Vicar to the lab
Vicars: return the favour

A new project, in St Albans Diocese: ‘Take your Vicar to the Lab,’ aims to promote healthier co-existence between religion and science and to deepen peoples’ appreciation of both.

Although not all scientific endeavour is in a lab and the work of clergy takes place outside a church too, the project will seek invitations for clergy to go to science labs and for scientists to visit churches, promoting a two-way discussion about the mutual impact of science and faith.

These reciprocal events will promote better understanding of the research process among clergy and signal to scientists the relevance and value of the Christian faith in addressing moral, ethical and spiritual dimensions of scientific research.

The programme will air some perennial questions: Does science demolish faith or deepen it? How can a serious scientist be a committed Christian? How should we understand the Big Bang, evolution, miracles, God and ourselves? The encounters in the lab and in church will allow these questions to be answered, from theological, scientific, historical and philosophical perspectives.

Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull, who is one of the two project directors said:

“The aim is that these encounters should be transformative rather than just informative. We want clergy to learn about how the greater familiarity with science these days among the general population can help them in presenting the claims of the Christian faith.

“Clergy and in fact all Christians can fail to engage with science, even though there many Christians who are also scientists. This is an omission as so much of our lives is shaped by science - from the smartphone to the latest medical advances.

“Scientists, too, can fail to engage with faith. This is also an omission as our lives are given purpose, meaning and significance by Christian faith.”

In the last few years, public awareness of scientific endeavours and achievements have increased considerably, largely as a result of communication in jargon-free terms in widely accessible formats.

The hope is that ‘Vicars in Labs’ will allow clergy to communicate the timeless truths of the Christian faith in a way that makes them more accessible to a scientifically literate generation as well as helping scientists to appreciate the contribution that a faith-based worldview can make to their work.

Vicars in Labs is being made possible through a grant from the ‘Scientists in Congregations,’ programme, funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation.

If you have a scientist in your congregation who might be willing to invite your Vicar to work or if you know a scientist in your community who might be willing to take part, please contact:

vicarsinlabs@stalbans.anglican.org
Images of the Kingdom

A man ‘sleeps it off,’ at the bus stop oblivious to the world; a couple argue volubly as they literally step away from each other; inebriated young women totter down the street; bottles are smashed; there is vomit in the gutter and in the shadows, deals are done. Bedford Town centre at 1.30 am on a Sunday morning is no different from other town centres as large numbers of people, many of them young, ‘enjoy’ a night on the town. For many it is a good night out – a chance to socialise, to dance and to drink in company. For others there is excess, regret, despair and worse.

A fortnight ago I witnessed this when I went out with the Bedford Street Angels. Like Street Pastors elsewhere, Street Angels are Christians who spend the night patrolling the town centre offering practical (and where appropriate spiritual) assistance to those who are out. Setting out from their base at St Peter de Merton Church the team I was with circuited the town centre, whilst another team set up table outside Debenhams as a static station with coffee and other resources. Back at base another pair prayed for us.

Bedford Street Angels grew out of the dark side of the town centre. Eight years ago, Robert, the 17-year-old son of Fred and Fran Gill was attacked and drowned in the river. Seeking to understand how to respond to this desperate loss as Christians they looked for a way of helping others to avoid a similar fate and came up with Street Angels. Since then there has been this quiet witness of practical love.

For what do Street Angels actually do? They listen to the distressed, the lonely and or those who through inebriation are less guarded about their vulnerabilities or faith; they clear up broken glass to prevent lacerated feet; they give water to the dehydrated; sandwiches to the hungry and space blankets to the cold; they guide the lost and see that the disorientated get home; they sit with the sick and seek protection for those at risk; they pray when asked and speak of God when questioned; and they hand out flip flops to those who can no-longer walk in their party shoes.

It is quiet witness that has won the admiration of the police and town centre authorities, and the appreciation of those who are helped (or at least most of them).

As I drove home just before 2.00 pm (I opted out a bit early to be fit for Sunday worship) I heard on the radio Mo Farah win his second God medal. I also thought of the Kingdom of God. For what is the Kingdom – it is the love of God breaking into, transforming, renewing the disordered world that we have made. A Kingdom that I glimpsed that night on the streets of Bedford as small acts of love transformed an otherwise disordered world.

So that we may be effective witnesses to Jesus Christ, The Archbishops’ of Canterbury and York are inviting every parish, fresh expression of Church, school, chaplaincy, retreat house, and praying community to join in ten days of prayer for evangelism and witness in the run up to Pentecost 2017. For some that might be hosting special prayer events, prayer rooms, holiday clubs or the like. For others it might be using the wide range of resources that will be available (like the ‘pray for five’ bracelets) to encourage individual prayer. For others it might mean working with other sisters and brothers in hosting your own ‘beacon event’. Whatever it is, please consider joining in this global movement of prayer. There’ll be much more stories, ideas, resources and information in the coming months, but for now we sign up to receive information direct from the Archbishops at www.thykingdom.co.uk. To watch a three minute video from Archbishop Justin and some of those involved in 2016 sharing how God worked: https://vimeo.com/181913904
New Archdeacon’s ministry begins one evening in Stevenage

The Revd Janet Mackenzie became ‘The Venerable’ on 6th September on her collation by Bishop Alan as the Archdeacon of Hertford, making her the most senior woman in ministry in the diocese.

The Mayors of Stevenage and Hertford, the Vice-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, Mr Richard Beazley and his wife Violet, and the Representative Deputy Lieutenant for Barnet, Mr Martin H C Russell were present as well as clergy and lay people from all over Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, Luton and Barnet. St Andrew’s and St George’s was full: there approaching 400 people attending.

Archdeacon Janet began her teaching career in Stevenage teaching maths and music at Heathcote School, Stevenage, a comprehensive school now closed and at The Valley School, Stevenage, a school for students with moderate learning difficulties. Subsequently she held other posts, including as Deputy and Acting Head, before working in Luton Borough Council’s Education Department until she went to train for Ordination at Westcott House.

Since being ordained, she served her curacy in Sandy and has been a Vicar in Luton since 2010, becoming Area Dean of Luton in 2012.

Janet is a member of Girlguiding UK and has been an adult leader, being currently the Anglia Region Faith Adviser and Chaplain to Girlguiding Hertfordshire. She was the musical director of the Hertfordshire Police Choir for 10 years and ran the Gordon Craig Singers for 6 years.

Mr Martin Russell DL provided one of many lighter moments in the service when he recounted how he had heard Janet describe herself as responsible for parishes east of the A1 and related this to his wife, a Scot, who replied “that includes Edinburgh, where the writ of the Church of England clearly does not run”. Mr Russell continued: “I reflected that the A1 also used to go through at least six cities with cathedrals: Peterborough, Leeds, York, Rippon, Durham and Newcastle. Whether this broad claim represents aspiration on your part or anticipation, I do not know, but good luck any way!” He hoped that Janet would not by pass Barnet and that they would find her an “A1 Archdeacon.” Amen to that.
Britain’s First Saint gets Heritage Lottery Fund go-ahead

The transformational project ‘Britain’s First Saint: Telling the Whole Story,’ at St Albans Cathedral will go ahead after the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded £3.87 million for the project. A further £3 million has been raised through the generosity of over 1000 donors.

The project will see significant new facilities at the cathedral, delivering a refreshed programme of events and activities for all ages, vastly improved visitor facilities with, for the first time, level access to the Cathedral, café, shop and toilets.

The Dean said, “This is wonderful news from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Fund exists to make more people aware of the riches of our national heritage, and St Albans Cathedral deserves to be far better known as the oldest Christian site in Britain, with a uniquely long and rich history to tell.

“With this grant, and with the match funding that has so generously been given by trusts and by over a thousand individuals, we shall create a beautiful new welcome centre, a new centre for schoolchildren, a new exhibition area, and a new adult study centre and library. We shall be able to present the Cathedral’s treasures in a much more attractive way, which includes illuminating the medieval wall paintings and rebuilding the ruined medieval shrine of St Amphibalus. Working with the City’s own Museum project and visitor strategy, we shall make St Albans a first-choice destination for tourists and pilgrims alike.”

The project will work with and complement the nearby development of the Town Hall Museum, also made possible by National Lottery players thanks to a grant of £2.8million from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Preparatory work will get underway in the autumn with the building works due to be completed by the summer of 2019. The programme of HLF funded activities will continue for several years. The Cathedral is launching a special blog so people can keep up to date with the project as it develops. To sign up go to: albanbritainsfirstsaint.wordpress.com
Creationtide puts environment back on church’s agenda

2016 has been a year of prayer and progress for the environment. The Paris Agreement was preceded by a 200 mile ‘Pilgrimage to Paris and over 1.8 million people from faith communities voiced concern about climate justice: the impact of climate change on the poor. The Paris agreement was a milestone. Bishop Nick Holtam, Church of England Lead Bishop on environment, said: “What matters now is that governments actually deliver a low carbon future - the transparency of accountability and process of review will be what ensures that happens. This looks like real progress - there is now a much more positive spirit about what now needs to happen than after Copenhagen six years ago, but we are still at an early stage on the journey.”

Now that positive spirit has been given a further fillip by the news at the beginning of September that the US and China will ratify the Paris agreement. This leaves the UK yet to announce when we will ratify, although the Government have signalled that it intends to do so.

Creationtide
Creationtide falls in the month of September and lasts this year until 4th October. It is a good time for churches and individuals to rediscover old ways and find new ones of making a positive difference, even if a small one, to benefit the environment. Bishop Nick Holtam again: “These liturgical resources provide richly for churches celebrating Creationtide. Celebrating Creationtide marks a shift in the Christian understanding of our relationship to creation under God. The consequences of teaching over recent centuries that humanity has been given domination over creation are clear in the complex environmental crisis we now face. It is important that Christians rediscover older traditions of a godly relationship of humanity to the wider created order.”

“Creationtide is important ecumenically too. The concept was introduced by the Ecumenical Patriarch in 1989, and is spreading widely in Western Christianity. The Pope’s declaration of an annual day of prayer on 1 September will give the profile of Creationtide a significant boost. Creationtide therefore represents an important Orthodox contribution to the deepening of common Christian values across historic denominational divisions.”

Helen Hutchison, Diocesan Environment Officer, suggests a number of projects that can help to achieve this and can re-engage parishes with the environmental agenda. It is equally important for the church to demonstrate that faith and conscience can help to achieve the objectives which face the Government.

Among the projects are ideas such as using churchyards as a ‘Noahs Ark’ for endangered tree species like ash or elm, discovering the ancient reverence and connection with the earth through initiatives such as ‘Forest Church,’ holding services in the open air at certain times of year or by taking part in A Rocha’s online green survey to win bronze silver or gold Eco Awards. details of all these projects can be found at: http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/faith/environment-officer-news-updates/
Sleepout 2015 raised £53,664

The £53,664 raised by the Diocese of St Albans Sleepout for eleven charities supporting homeless people was the second highest figure raised in its 22 year history. It brings the total raised to help homeless charities in the diocese in their work of caring for some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable people in our communities to over £600,000.

Last year also saw the largest number of charities taking part in Sleepout, and this also perhaps reflects the healthy total.

The coordinator, Brian Peyton, said: “At the twenty second Abbey Sleep out we were blessed with probably the highest temperatures in the history of the event, with figures of 10/11 degrees Celsius, although there was a wind with a cooling edge to it. Some sleepers reported difficulty getting asleep as the wind rustled through their plastic sheets and whistled around them. That the event was again a huge success with everyone in good spirits. With just over 400 people sleeping out, the third highest number in the history of the event, nearly half were under 18 yrs.

Last year the event raised over £58,000 when we had 470 sleepers. The event gives people an experience of what it can feel like to sleep rough, which increasing numbers of homeless people have to do.

This year’s Sleepout see some early participants making a return, among them Dr Laura Neilson who will be the medical aide for the event. It will not be her first visit to Sleepout: as a member of Susannah Underwood’s Youth Group, she attended three times in the 1990s, in her teens. Now married, to Chris Neilson, Diocesan Church and Community Officer, her support is much valued. Chris will also support the event. Perhaps they will re-unite with other members of their old Youth Group.

Susannah Underwood, now ordained and serving as a Team Vicar in the Welwyn Team Mininstry, recalls the time. “Roughly 20 years ago was my first sleep out experience. As a leader of St. Mary’s Welwyn youth group I went with a bunch of teenagers expecting a really uncomfortable night. It wasn’t 5 ° but it was great fun and I even slept surprisingly well. It’s great to know that so many young people are still sleeping out today, but also rather sobering that in 20 years we’ve still failed as a society to provide good and safe homes for some of our vulnerable people. It’s a great cause. So come on, class of ’96 if you’re out there come and join the sleep out on the 2nd December.”
**Diocesan Appointments**

**Diocesan Director of Ordinands**

The Revd Quentin Chandler has been appointed as the new Diocesan Director of Ordinands and will also become Vicar in the benefice of Marston Moretaine with Lidlington. He comes to us from Peterborough Diocese where he was Principal of the Lay Ministry Course and Continuing Ministerial Development Officer.

**Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor**

Jeremy Hurst has been appointed as Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor with effect from 12th September. All new enquiries relating to safeguarding, safeguarding training, DBS and general enquiries, and requests for change of appointment of Lead Recruiters should be addressed to Jeremy, at the Diocesan Office address. Telephone: 01727 818107, Mobile: 07867 350886. The e-mail address remains the same: safeguarding@stalbans.anglican.org. Jeremy has spent 30 years as a police officer including the last 15 in safeguarding.

There will be a ‘handover period’ of some weeks and Chris Lees (aside) will be available for ongoing enquiries and issues relating to matters received by him before the new appointment. We wish Chris all the best in his retirement.

**Clergy Retirement Officers**

The following Clergy Retirement Officers have been appointed:

- The Revd Christopher Strong for the Archdeaconry of Bedford.
- The Revd Martin King for the Archdeaconry of Hertford.
- The Revd Austin Smith continues as Retirement Officer for the Archdeaconry of St Albans.

**Vocations Advisors**

The following clergy have been appointed as Vocations Advisors:

- The Revd Canon Guy Buckler for St Albans Archdeaconry.
- The Revd Javaid Iqbal for St Albans Archdeaconry.
- The Revd Christopher Ferris for Hertford Archdeaconry.
- The Revd Fiona Wheatley for Hertford Archdeaconry.

**Clergy Appointments**

Canon David Abbott, Vicar of Sunnyside with Bourne End is to retire at the end of September.

Anne Crawford, presently Rector of the benefice of Toddington and Chalgrave is to become Vicar of St Matthias, Richmond (Richmond Team Ministry), in Southwark Diocese.

Jacqueline Curtis, presently Team Rector in Crosslacon Team Ministry, is to become Priest-in-charge (Team Rector Designate) in the benefice of Harrold and Carlton with Chellington (LEP), Odell, Stevington, Turvey, Wymington with Podington (to become Chellington Team Ministry).

Malcolm Finlay, formerly Associate Curate at St John’s Southall in London Diocese, has been appointed to a 3 year interim post of Associate Rector in the benefice of Broxbourne w. Wormley.

Kylie Anne Hodgins, presently Rector of Cottenham and Priest-in-Charge of Rampton in Ely Diocese, is to become Vicar of St Luke’s Church, Bricket Wood.

Timothy Horlock, presently Vicar and Rural Dean of Stevenage in the benefice of Stevenage, Broadwater, St Peter, is to become Vicar of St Andrew, Chorleywood.

Coralie McCluskey, Agricultural Chaplain & Rural Affairs Officer, Bedford Archdeaconry, has retired to Builth Wells, Powys.

Capt. Paul Niemiec, presently Pioneer Team Vicar in the Ouzel Valley Team Ministry is to become Team Vicar (part-time) in the parish of Snettisham, Norwich Diocese.

Dominic Newstead, presently Associate Minister at St Andrew, Bebington in Chester Diocese, is to become Vicar in the benefice of Little Heath.

David Short, presently Assistant Curate at Christ Church, Chorleywood is to become Vicar of St Peter with St Mark’s Hospital Church, Furze Platt, Maidenhead, in Oxford Diocese.

Shaun Speller, presently Assistant Curate in the benefice of Harpenden, is to become Vicar in the benefice of Henlow & Langford.

Catherine Staziker, who holds PtO in Sheffield Diocese, has been appointed as interim Team Vicar (with special responsibility for Christ the King Haldens) for 2 years in Digswell Team Ministry.

Caren Topley, presently Associate Minister (SSM) in the benefice of Clifton and Southill, has been appointed as interim stipendiary Rector for two years.

Peter Turnbull, presently Team Vicar in Crosslacon Team Ministry, is to become Associate Priest (Team Vicar Designate) in the benefice of Harrold and Carlton with Chellington (LEP), Odell, Stevington, Turvey, Wymington with Podington (to become Chellington Team Ministry).

David Warner, Assistant Curate in the benefice of Abbots Langley has become Priest-in-Charge/Incumbent Designate in the benefice of Harrold and Carlton with Chellington (LEP), Odell, Stevington, Turvey, Wymington with Podington (to become Chellington Team Ministry).

Nicholas (Nick) Wheeler LVO, presently Honorary Priest (SSM) in the benefice of Holy Trinity Etham, Southwark Diocese, is to become Team Vicar (house for duty) with special responsibility for St Peter’s Arkley.
**EVENT LISTINGS**
for
September 2016

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

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**Concerts & Drama**

- **St James the Apostle, Bushey**

- **RSCM Event - Meet, Eat Sing with Rosemary Field** is at Abbey Primary School St Albans, AL1 1DQ. on Tuesday 20th September at 7pm. All singers, organists, choir directors and clergy are welcome. This event is not intended for children. A Fish & Chip Supper will be provided (Veg Burger also available), after which we will sing some of the music of Parry, directed by Rosemary Field. Cost £10 per singer (£8 with vegetarian option), including food. Book by Friday 9 September. www.rscm-stalbans.co.uk/?p+2195.

- **St Peter’s Church Berkhamsted**
  - Bridgewater Sinfonia concert with works by J.S. Bach, Aaron Copeland and Rimsky-Korsakov, on Saturday 1st October at 7.30pm. Tickets £15 in advance £16 on door, U18’s free. Enquiries 01442 873205 or www.bridgewater-sinfonia.org.uk

- **St Owen’s Church, Bromham**
  - MK43 8LL Concert by Rutland Wind Ensemble on Sunday 2nd October at 3pm. Works by Handel, Beethoven, Mozart, Warlock & Jacob. Tickets £8 adults U16 £4. Teas from £1. Also A mesmerising music and dance performance by The Osiligi Troupe of Maasai Warriors on Wednesday 19th October at 7.30pm. £10 adult Child £5 Booking essential for both events call 01234 825454 (am) 826551 (eves).

- **St Albans Cathedral**
  - St Mary’s the Virgin, Church Street, Rickmansworth, Afternoon Tea Concert of French Melodies, including Faure, Debussy and Massenet on Sunday 9th October 3pm. Soprano Hilary Pearce, Guitar and Piano Andrew Sykes, Flute Keith Champion. In aid of Small Steps helping children with disabilities.

- **St Saviour’s Church, Sandpit Lane, St Albans AL1 4DF** Radlett Choral Society Concert on Saturday 19th November, 7.30pm. Faure - Requiem, J.S. Bach - Cantata 18, Alexander Flood - Born in Flight. With the Mariana Ensemble, Soprano: Sarah Gabriel, Bass: Samuel Evans. Tickets £12, accompanied children under 16 free.

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**Open Days & Festivals**

- **St John’s Church Bourne End, HP1 2RU**
  - ‘Art in Bourne End’ in the Parish Room on Thursday 15th and Saturday 17th September 10-4pm. Works by Claudia Brown, Martin Warner and Rebecca Wood as part of HVAF Open Studios. Refreshments available. Contact Claudia on 07714 761261.

- **The Church Of St John The Baptist**
  - Chipping Barnet, EN5 4BW. ‘Blooming Musicals!’ Flower Festival from 16th to 18th September. Theme is West End Musicals and will be complemented by displays of church vestments and plate. Local musical bands and choirs will entertain throughout the festival. For festival opening times and details visit www.barnetparishchurch.org.uk

- **St Paul’s Church, Bedford, MK40 1SQ**
  - Michaelmas Fair on Saturday 24th September 10-4pm. Wide range of stalls from crafts, preserves, gifts, books, bric a brac, clothing and fun activities. Music by The Moonlighters and Jazz Choir. Refreshments and light lunches. Details at: www.stpaulschurchofbedford.org.uk

- **St Mary’s Church, Ashwell**
  - The 17th Ashwell Book Weekend will be held in on Saturday, 1st October, (10am – 5pm) and on Sunday, 2nd October (2-5pm). Thousands of books at bargain prices. Refreshments available. Entrance £1. Children free.

- **St Michaels Church, St Albans**
  - ‘The Voices of Morebath’ a new play by Eamon Duffy about a 16th Century English village. Voices will be delivered as a rehearsed reading on Saturday 1st October. Tickets include a Q&A with Professor Duffy between 5 and 6pm, the rehearsed reading from 7pm and a glass of wine or fruit juice during the interval of the play reading. Tickets are only available online: £10 + booking fee via voicesofmorebath.eventbrite.co.uk

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**Talks & Courses**

- **Equipping God’s People**
  - **Leading Small Groups 17/09/16 & 24/09/16** Leading Small Groups is a four session course over two mornings for anyone who leads or would like to lead small groups/bible studies and wants to learn more about how adults learn and the skills of facilitating groups. Venue in Luton area to be confirmed. Contact: Kathryn McNamara pdadmin@stalbans.anglican.org 01727 818151
  - Also See EGP leaflet in bundle notices.

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**Bedford School Library, de Parys Ave, Burnaby Rd, gate.**

- **Tuesday 11 October** at 7.30 pm. The ‘Mary Rose’ restored, illustrated talk by Edward Towne, Official Mary Rose Trust lecturer. (Free to HA members (Historical Association-Bedford). Others welcome with a donation. Details 07989 837819/01234 266839.

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SeeRound Online Events Sept 2016/08 www.stalbans.anglican.org/news/seeround