It’s Archdeacon Janet!

Bishop Alan has appointed the Revd Janet Mackenzie, to be the next Archdeacon of Hertford, in succession to the Venerable Dr Trevor Jones, who retires this summer. Janet is currently the Vicar of St Augustine of Canterbury, Luton, and Area Dean of Luton.

Following a career in education, Janet was ordained in St Albans Diocese in 2006 and served her curacy at St Swithun, Sandy. In 2010 she moved to St Augustine’s.

Bishop Alan said: "Janet is an experienced parish priest and is a pastorally and strategically effective minister. I am looking forward to working with her in her new role as Archdeacon of Hertford. She will be a member of my staff team and she will, I know, make a significant contribution to the diocesan vision, ‘Living God’s Love,’ through which we seek the spiritual and numerical growth of the church."

Speaking about her appointment, Janet said: ‘I am looking forward to serving the people of East Hertfordshire in my new role with new responsibilities, but sad to be leaving the people of Luton who have supported and encouraged me as we have walked the way of faith together.’

Janet’s present position is overseen by the Bishop of Bedford, who commented: ‘Janet Mackenzie has provided visionary and wise leadership as both a parish priest and Area Dean in Luton. She is held in the highest regard by her colleagues. I am delighted that she is to be the next Archdeacon of Hertford and that she will continue to be a close colleague.’

It is expected that Janet will take up her new duties in September.

Renewing Living God’s Love: What will your parish celebrate?

As part of refreshing and renewing our diocese’s vision, ‘Living God’s Love’, events in every Deanery this autumn will encourage us as we look to the future with one of our bishops. Watch this space for more details.

In preparation, we are asking parishes for examples from the last year or three of how you have Lived God’s Love in your parish with generosity and joy, imagination and courage. Where, for example, has there been an occasion or instance of ‘joy’ or ‘generosity’ or ‘imagination’ or ‘courage’ in transforming your community or making new disciples or going deeper into God? Why not re lect, pray and look back – and then celebrate the good things – big and small – that can so often get forgotten.

You might create a ‘celebration’ noticeboard or webpage – do people have photos to contribute? Perhaps there are some specific ‘thanksgivings’ you could include in the weekly intercessions? Perhaps you might even have a special ‘celebration’ focus in a service? The PCC might have ideas too and you will want to include people of all ages in celebrating. Let’s give thanks for how God has been working in and through us – and then be ready to share and encourage each other at our autumn events.
What happened to the ‘Big Society?’

At the heart of the 2010 Conservative Manifesto, the vision for the Big Society foresees much increased community empowerment, a greater role for charities and social enterprises, and a growth of individual social action. It was to be a movement of power away from politicians to the people. In the words of the Prime Minister, it was ‘a call to arms. Society is not a spectator sport.’ Yet just six years later the ‘Big Society’ has vanished from speeches and been relegated in policy terms. The driver for a smaller state is no-longer this new social theory, but the demands of austerity. The income of the voluntary sector has fallen and government funding of charities has reduced. Even Wikipedia begins ‘The Big Society was a political ideology….’

These observations are the context for a new report by the Oasis Foundation which was launched at the end of April at the House of Lords. Along with Janet Bird, vice-chair of our Board of Church and Society, I was there to hear Revd Steve Chalke, the founder of Oasis, speak about the growing needs of the vulnerable in our society, the opportunity to reimagine the Big Society Project and the potential for the churches to be at the heart of this. The report, titled ‘Faith in Public Service’, lays out yet again the particular contribution that faith, and in particular Christianity, can make to the well-being of society and the response to the needs of people and communities. It includes the ten million people that are reached by the churches through their community activities; the emphasis on ‘place’, the contribution to social cohesion and community regeneration, and the personal focus of what is offered.

It is a significant contribution, but the report argues that the churches could have even greater impact. There is still the fear on the part of public authorities and others that faith groups will use public resources for proselytising, there is often a lack of capacity and leadership, at times imagination has been lacking and finance is constrained, but it is a vision of integrated neighbourhood services that fill the space vacated by the state.

This is the vision of the Oasis Trust, worked out in their thirty-five local hubs, where there is an integration of churches, schools, adult education and children’s centres with food-banks, health care, debt advice centres, extended youth and children’s work, family support and much more. A Christian contribution to public service that is both inspiring and challenging.

And even if the scale of what is envisaged may seem a million miles from the reality of what is possible in your congregation it is a reminder to us all of the transforming power of the Gospel; and a call to live God’s love in our neighbourhoods with passion and love. For the ‘Big Society’ as political dogma may be defunct, but as Christian hope it remains very much alive.

Archbishop Rowan gives boost to Christian Aid week in St Albans Diocese

Former Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Lord Williams, Chair of Christian Aid, will preach at both the morning services in St Albans Cathedral at the start of Christian Aid Week, on Pentecost Sunday, 15 May.

Connecting the two, Archbishop Rowan said: “Pentecost is a time for remembering that the Holy Spirit gives the gift of communication – we recognise strangers speaking our own language. Christian Aid Week is all about the implications of living in a world made new by Christ, in which we can respond to this miracle of recognition and sharing – and we are reminded of the need to tackle all the varieties of insecurity, poverty and disadvantage that silence people the world over. The challenge is whether we are ready and willing to be part of this process of releasing the voices of the poor so that – like the people in Jerusalem at the first Pentecost – we can hear them talking in our own language about the wonderful works of God”. Christian Aid Week this year will benefit communities in Bangladesh whose homes are regularly flooded. A £250 gift will pay for a house to be raised above the flood waters and buy a goat and seeds to help poverty stricken families.
Lottery Fund boost for Historic Churches in the Diocese

Two out of four churches receiving Heritage Lottery Fund grants in the latest round are from St Albans Diocese.

All Saints Church, Turvey, Bedfordshire (left) has received a grant of £113,000. The grant will enable essential, urgent work to be carried out on the leaking roof, including the renewal of the roof timbers. A new children's area will be created together with a child’s guide to the church, and work is planned outside to record the gravestones as well as restore a grassed, tranquil area in the churchyard and install a new bench.

The Grade I listed church is situated at the heart of Turvey and has been at the centre of village life for a thousand years. It is one of the finest and oldest churches in the Diocese of St. Albans, with parts of the present building dating to Saxon times. It features in England’s Thousand Best Churches by Simon Jenkins. In addition to regular church services, in recent years All Saints has been used as a venue for music concerts and drama performances involving the local community, including the ‘Turvey Mysteries’ cycle of Mystery Plays.

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of HLF East of England, said: “Churches have been at the heart of our communities for hundreds of years. We are delighted that All Saints has been awarded a grant to address the urgent repairs needed to its structure. The church itself is a very important building, both architecturally and to its community, and this project will enable it to continue to function as a space for worship, and serve local people of all ages for a range of activities.”

The other local church receiving a grant in the recent round was St Mary the Virgin, Baldock, Hertfordshire (right). It will receive £211,200 for repairs to this Grade I listed church principally concerning works in the south aisle, including re-leading the roof replicating the present chevron design. The project includes modest re-ordering work designed to improve the building’s functionality for community use, some training, demonstrations of work in progress, teacher consultancy, exhibition and booklets.
Global Generosity gets an airing  
- and you can join in

This year, the national conference for the Church of England’s Parish and Mission Resourcing network is meeting in Hertfordshire. They are inviting guests to join them for a day when they will be focussing on Global Generosity: what generosity looks like in churches around the globe. They are hoping to nurture generosity in churches across this country. It is a happy coincidence that they are choosing to explore one of our four diocesan values, which should make this an intriguing occasion.

The conference takes place at High Leigh, near Hoddesdon, Herts, on Tuesday 19th July and day tickets cost £20. Input from across the globe, from different cultures, backgrounds and roles will provide a patchwork of different cultural insights as well as a range of perspectives and contributions. As well as traditional speaker input, sessions will also include the opportunity for shared conversation and bible study.

The list of international speakers includes: Susan Pinkney – talking about the World Giving Index, Ram Gidoomal, Gunnar Johnson – stewardship pastor of one of the USA’s most generous churches, Rev’d Suzanne Matale, Secretary General of the Zambia Council of Churches, a group from Mission Net – seeking to inspire young adults across Europe to effective, generous discipleship, and much more - see the Day Delegate Brochure for full details and how to book at: www.parishresources.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/DayDelegateBrochure.pdf or see the brochure in the bundle notices.

Faith leaders show international support for Paris climate accord

The Paris Climate deal, agreed in December, was signed by a record number of countries on Earth Day, 22th April. In the preceding days, two events significant for people of faith took place.

On 15th April, while at the Anglican Consultative Council meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, the Archbishop of Canterbury agreed to become the honorary Patron of the Anglican Communion’s network of environment champions. Accepting the invitation, he said: “Trips like this reveal more and more clearly as one listens to those in the Communion the huge life threatening seriousness of the matters that are being faced.” On 18th April, an inter faith statement on climate change was signed by global faith leaders to signal their support for the “full and ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement and of all other decisions adopted at COP 21.” Conference of European Churches President, Rt Rev. Christopher Hill KCVO, DD, is among the signatories, and said: “People of faith and goodwill profoundly welcomed the Paris Agreement on climate change. But now implementation is necessary to give cash value to Paris. The world looks on expecting action.”

The statement underscores that caring for Creation is a shared responsibility and unites people in action for the good of the global family. “This agreement gives us hope that a change of mind is occurring in humanity. It needs to be seen in our actions—on the level of our governments, the big and small businesses, our communities and churches, and our own everyday lives,” remarked Fr Heikki Huttunen, general secretary of CEC and signatory to the interfaith statement. “We need to learn to see the world and its life as a whole: our treatment of the natural environment is not merely an ecological issue, it is in essence a moral issue.”
Jacqui Parkinson (above) is behind Revelation Threads, an exhibition of textile art created at St Albans Cathedral through which she aims to retell the extraordinary story of the last book of the Bible. She says: “I have always been fascinated by the book of Revelation - and always mystified. Revelation can seem a muddle of scrolls, trumpets, bowls, with lots of disasters and plagues – but it’s also a vision of a gloriously Holy God who has a wonderful plan for each of us and for the whole of creation.”

The fourteen panels which took three years to create, raise issues of life and faith, good and evil, death and judgement, resurrection and a new Heaven and a new Earth.

As well as silks, the panels sometimes use delicate feathers, often with metallic finishes and occasional patches of real gold leaf. The work generates dramatic results, especially when caught in the light as happens in the Cathedral.

Sub Dean, Canon Richard Watson said “It is wonderful that we are able to show these beautiful artworks as part of the Cathedral’s ongoing life of prayer and worship. I’d encourage everyone to view the exhibition not just the once, but to make the most of its long stay here – coming back and looking again; looking deeper and listening carefully to ‘what the Spirit is saying to the churches’ through the skill of the artist.”

Jacqui Parkinson, is based in Devon and has created twelve smaller exhibitions, sponsored by the Deo Gloria Trust, between 2006 and 2012. Her work is grounded in her Christian faith and whatever position people come from to view it, she hopes to bring something intriguing, inspiring, encouraging and challenging. Jacqui was known to many as Jacqui Frost (married to Rob who died in 2007), and changed her name after marrying Andrew in 2010. Revelation Threads will be on display around the Cathedral until 5th June.
Two-wheeled challenges x2

Two extraordinary cycling challenges, both raising much-needed funds will be undertaken in June by people from St Albans Diocese. These are such big challenges that the diocese could not contain them: one is to pedal from Lands End to John O’Groats in just eight days, the other is to travel the entire west coast of Ireland on a bicycle without a saddle!

MAMIL* from Welwyn heads north

The Revd David Munchin, Team Rector of Welwyn is supporting Welwyn Christian Aid’s initiative in support of marginalised women in Honduras and El Salvador. He hopes to raise £5000, but the EU will make every pound worth £4, so the total raised will be a massive £20,000.

He says: “Normally this trip is done in fourteen stages but we are doing it in just eight!” To sponsor this MAMIL (*Middle-Aged Man In Lycra) visit [uk.virginmoneygiving.com/WelwynChristianAid2016](http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/WelwynChristianAid2016). You can also follow his progress on twitter - @DavidMunchin.

Good Shepherd turns to two wheels

Stuart, from Church of the Good Shepherd, Leighton Buzzard, the diocese’s youngest church, was listening to his Vicar, the Revd Paul Niemiec, talking about God’s gift of unique talents to each of us for use in serving each other and building up the church.

He thought: “Well I can’t sing, I can’t play an instrument, and I don’t bake. However it seems God has given me a talent in endurance sports. I like to ride my bike and I’ve been known to ride it quite far. I’ve raised £000s for charities in the past through marathon running. So why not combine these two gifts to give back to the Church?”

On 17 June he’ll be embarking on an epic 1,400 mile ride around the West coast of Ireland following the Wild Atlantic Way, riding for up to 20 hours and covering 200 miles per day whilst getting no more than 2 hours sleep a night. Stuart’s bike will also have no saddle! He’ll be standing for the entire time effectively ‘running’ on his ElliptiGO bike, like a cross-trainer on wheels.”

Stuart continues: “This spectacular journey will test me both physically and mentally. I really don’t know if I can do it. What I do know is that I cannot do this alone and I need YOUR SUPPORT. I would love everyone reading this to be inspired and do two things: 1) Please donate whatever you can at [www.sponsorstuart.uk](http://www.sponsorstuart.uk) 2) Discover your talent! What are you good at and how can you use your gift to support your local church, or other local community groups and good causes? You can track my progress live online from 17 June at tracker.sponsorstuart.uk.”
Clergy Appointments

**Peter Budgell**, presently Vicar of St Anne with St Christopher, Luton, is to retire to Exeter Diocese in the new year.

**David Cattle** presently Team Vicar in Diggswell Team Ministry (with special responsibility for Christ the King, Haldens) will be retiring to Norwich Diocese.

**Mike Fudger**, presently Priest-in-charge at St Peter de Merton w St Cuthbert, Bedford is to retire to Chichester Diocese.

**Rebecca (Becky) Leach** currently Associate Minister in the benefice of Harpenden, has been appointed Vicar of St Stephen's Church, St Albans.

**Mark Newman**, Assistant Curate in the benefice of Eaton Socon is moving to Oxford Diocese.

Obituary

**Robin Boyce** was a Reader based in Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, died at the beginning of April.

Other Appointments

**Rural Dean of Buntingford**

The Revd Kate Peacock will be taking on the role of Rural Dean of Buntingford, when the Revd Canon Richard Morgan stands down at the end of June.

Long Service

**Roland King** has been Churchwarden of St Leonard's, Sandridge, for 59 years since ‘standing in temporarily’ all those years ago. The parish recently marked that time in office and his move to Churchwarden Emeritus status and is looking forward to celebrating his 60 years of service next year.

Obituary

With sadness, we report the death of **Robin Boyce**, who was a Reader based in Linslade, Leighton Buzzard, died at the beginning of April.

Farewell Laura

Laura Hart will be well known to many callers and visitors to the Ministry Division at Holywell Lodge. She retired at the end of April and her dedicated hard work as well her sense of humour will be greatly missed by her immediate colleagues as well as those further afield.

Calling all flower arrangers!

A letter has come into SeeRound from the Parish of Bishop’s Hatfield St Etheldreda with St Luke:

‘The Parish Church of St. Etheldreda Hatfield is holding a flower festival in the church, from Thursday the 23rd of June to Sunday the 26th of June this year. This is in conjunction with the Patronal Festival being held over the weekend in the Hatfield House Estate. The church is trying to raise money for some much needed updates to the structure of the church to include the introduction of toilets and wash facilities in the church.

Our theme for the flower festival is “Shakespeare Flower Festival”- Shakespeare’s World of Plays – commemorating the 400th year after his death. We hope interpret different plays in different parts of the church areas, through the use of colours, flowers, seasonal greens and flowers, and the use of props if available. If you or your church would like to take part we would be delighted! We would be grateful if you could respond to this letter with the information below by May 27th so we can allocate spaces in the church for your team. We are not allocating plays and so you are free to choose which play you would like to do on a first come basis.

We do hope that everyone will enjoy this event. Some of our flower arrangers at St Etheldreda have helped with flower festivals at other churches within the diocese, finding the experience of meeting and helping other churches rewarding and fun. I understand that this is very short notice and I apologize for that but because of this we are in even more need of your help and support. We will be holding an open day on Thursday June 2nd from 10 to 1 with coffee and tea available to be able to view and plan your area of the church and we hope to see you then.

Thank you so much.

Carrie Shannon Tel. 07960 082058 (St. Etheldreda Flower Team Lead)

Please email responses to CarrieShannonUK@gmail.com with details including your name and that of church/flower club, Email, Phone and Top 5 choices for Shakespeare plays to use. Also let us know if you would be able to come to the open viewing day.’

Four Canons

Bishop Alan has installed four new Honorary Canons at St Albans Cathedral: The Revd Lindsay Dew, Rural Dean of Biggleswade and Rector of Dunton with Wrestlingworth & Eyeworth, the Revd Peter Wadsworth, Vicar of St Saviour, St Albans, Mrs Elizabeth Fotheringham and Mr Wayne Hurst, both Wardens of the Cathedral.
EVENT LISTINGS
for
May 2016

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

Concerts & Drama

St Paul’s Church, Bedford MK40 1SQ
Chamber Music recital on Saturday 14th May, 7.30pm, by local and international artists: guitar, voice, piano duets and solos by Tamara McCoy & Valerie Hartzell. Includes works by Carulli, Liszt, & Boccherini. Tickets £12 (£10 concs) from 01234 340163 or at door www.stpaulschurchbedford.org.uk.

St Thomas’s Church, Stopsley, Luton. LU2 7UL
Concert by the Luton Male Voice Choir on Saturday 14th May at 7.30pm. Tickets £8 (inc refreshments) Tel 01582 729194.

St. Swithun’s Church, Sandy.
Concert with the Hitchin Band on Saturday 21st May at 7.30pm. Tickets £5, available from Sandy Information Centre at Sandy Town Council Offices or from Colin Osborne on 01767 682032. Proceeds to The Leprosy Mission.

St. James the Apostle, Bushey.
Saturday Recital Series. 12 noon until 5pm. Tickets £5, available beforehand and light lunches afterwards served at Church House.

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

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

Special Services

St Albans Cathedral
Lord Rowan Williams, Chair of Christian Aid will be speaking on Pentecost Sunday 15th May at both 9.30am Parish Eucharist and 11.15am Choral Matins. This also marks the start of Christian Aid Week.

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

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

St Mary’s Church, Hitchin.
Flowers and wedding dresses through the ages. Saturday 25th June (10-6pm) and Sunday 26th June (12-4pm). Music, refreshments and tower tours. Admission £5 (children free).

Open Days & Festivals

St Ippolys Church, SG4 7JP
Flower Festival Bank holiday weekend 28th, 29th and 30th May. The beautiful medieval church will be filled with flower arrangements along the theme of ‘Grand Days Out’. Tea, coffee and cakes available. Mary Hooper 01462 457350 m.hooper214@icloud.com

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

St Alban’s Church
The Bishop’s Lecture Series – ‘New and Old: Ancient Ways and the Freshness of Grace’
The Rev’d Dr Andrew Davison, Canon Philosopher
Wednesday 18th May 7.30pm
See poster in bundle notices
For more details and to book tickets, www.stalbanscathedral.org/learning/study-centre/talks/

St Paul’s Church, Datchworth, SG3 6TL
10 village gardens will be open on Sunday 29th May 12.30pm-5pm. Lunches, BBQ and cream teas, live music and beautifully decorated 800 year-old church. Leisurely walk or courtesy bus. Admission inc gardens guide and car park Adults £6 accompanied children free.

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

St. Swithun’s Church, Hitchin.
Parish Eucharist and 11.15am Choral Matins. This also marks the start of Christian Aid Week.

St Ippolys Church
Flower Festival Bank holiday weekend 28th, 29th and 30th May. The beautiful medieval church will be filled with flower arrangements along the theme of ‘Grand Days Out’. Tea, coffee and cakes available. Mary Hooper 01462 457350 m.hooper214@icloud.com